The World, the Church and the Devil

John Archibald Morison

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THE WORLD, THE CHURCH, AND THE DEVIL

BY

JOHN ARCHIBALD MORISON

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THE WORLD THE CHURCH AND THE DEVIL

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CHAPTER I

TRAVELERS

"CHANGE for Millerton, Barry, Morningside and Mapleton; this car goes to Port Huron and Chicago," sang out the brakesman on the fast express that came rushing into Safford Junction from the East. He had scarcely pronounced these words when a young man dressed in black, seated near the center of the car, leaned over and hurriedly thrusting a manuscript he had been reading into his grip with his large muscular fingers snapped it shut. It was a chill morning in the month of November and as he stepped off the car and quickly moved across the platform he was followed by a large squarely built man and two ladies who leisurely made their way in the same direction. As they

moved over to where the young man was standing a local train of three cars backed slowly alongside. "Here is our train, Alice," said Dr. Maclaren to his wife, as she drew near to where he was standing. "This is our last change and we will soon be home." "I am sure I am not sorry," replied his wife, "although we've had a lovely trip, but you know I'm just dying to see the children. I hope they will be at the station to meet us." "You may be sure they will. I phoned Duncan last night from Toronto that he could make ready for that operation this afternoon. He wired me to the steamer at Quebec to hurry up, as David Bruce was home at his father's and that the only chance of prolonging his life was an immediate operation."

"I hope you will be able to help him," replied his wife—then, dropping her voice, added, "poor boy, he has just about broken his mother's heart. Of course, he was a bit wild, but I always liked him and I think most of the neighbors did also. While he was reckless and never went to church, yet in many ways he seemed to be the best of their boys. He was manly and above board and not a bit like his brother Dick, whom I always thought more pious than righteous. But the old man, who was never done finding fault

with David, could see nothing but good in Dick—he always went to church with him."

"All aboard for Millerton, Barry, Morningside, Mapleton and Glencoe," shouted the trainman, and Dr. Maclaren and his wife, after beckoning to Miss St. Claire, who had started down the pltaform, hastily took their chairs in the parlor car. Some seats in front of them they spied the young man in black whom they had observed the day before in the dining car between Montreal and Toronto. He was rather distinguished in appearance. The sort of man that one might look twice at. And Mrs. Maclaren, catching her husband's eye, whispered, "I wonder who that man is; he looks like a preacher. Perhaps he is going to Mapleton."

"Oh, yes," replied the Doctor, "I happened to meet Dugald Thomson last night at the Queens and he told me that they were expecting a minister for Sunday, a young man of more than ordinary ability; they are still hearing candidates, you know."

Dr. Maclaren was known far and wide as one of the most skilful surgeons in Ontario, and his absence from Mapleton for the unusual period of two months had been due to the fact that his well-known professional skill, coupled with the

high respect for his splendid manhood, which had been universally accorded him, had conspired to effect his election as representative of the Ontario Medical Society at the Congress of the British Medical Association, which had just concluded its sessions in the City of Glasgow. On this trip abroad he had been accompanied by his wife and by the daughter of the late Dr. St. Claire, to whose practise he had some years previously succeeded. In the mind of Mrs. Maclaren it was still an open question whether the learned thesis of her distinguished husband or the charming personality of Jean St. Claire had provoked the greater sensation among the younger members of that convention.

As the train drew into Barry Station, Jean, who had been monopolized since leaving Safford Junction by an elderly lady, Mrs. MacGregor, who had been her mother's friend, came forward.

"I see you have just been chatting with Mrs. MacGregor," said the Doctor. "She is a good old soul. What's the news from Mapleton?"

"She is just a dear," replied Jean, "and is returning home from Galt; but if I did not love her so much I would be inclined to laugh at her, for her first and last topic of conversation was the Church. They haven't got a minister settled yet

in St. Giles, but Mrs. MacGregor tells me that they expect to hear a young man on Sunday who has just returned from Edinburgh and who is said to be a great preacher."

"I hope your interest in him will not be other than theological, Jean," said Mrs. Maclaren, with a smile. "You know that after the Medical ball in Glasgow, young Dr. MacLeod, who claimed you for so many dances, told me that he was contemplating a trip to Canada next summer. The Scotch are such proverbial travelers, you know, and then he seemed strangely agitated when he missed meeting you again at the closing banquet. It was too amusing for anything, the way he acted. When I told him you had gone up to London the night before with Mrs. Dr. Webster and that you would not be back, but would join us at Liverpool, his eyes stared straight ahead of him for a moment and then he said that he could wish Mrs. Dr. Webster had gone to Heaven and gone alone; and then you know the flowers!" This sally of Mrs. Maclaren's caused the color to flush Jean's face and to mount up under the wavy brown hair that caressingly encircled her temples, and turning quickly to Dr. Maclaren, with a suppressed smile, she asked him if he knew that W. G. Hale of Mapleton was in the next car.

"No, but I will go through and see him. He will know all about the sensational flight of Dilicum to the United States. Your brother had about five thousand dollars on deposit at his bank and he has lost it all. That man Dilicum is surely a crook. Why, he even accepted a twelve-hundred-dollar deposit from Bob ten minutes before the Bank closed on Wednesday and on Thursday it did not open its doors. Dilicum was gone—nobody knew where—and it was said that the only man who was wise was Lawyer Sharp, the Bank's attorney."

"He was a good brother mason, wasn't he, John?" exclaimed his wife.

"Perhaps he was, Alice," replied the Doctor, "but you must not forget that St. Giles Church people were also taken in, and the minister simply had to get another church—he was badly deceived by Dilicum. That man was a proper hypocrite—used to attend prayer meeting, and his pious prayers fairly hypnotized the preacher and elders, while the ladies of the Foreign Missionary Society all thought he was just inspired, the fervent way he used to plead the cause of the benighted heathen. He told them at the annual church meeting, a year ago, that the churches had been playing with the missionary problem for long

enough and that it was about time they applied business methods to the missionary movement. Mrs. Lawrence almost became hysterical when he added that at every tick of the clock one thousand heathen souls dropped into Hell. The whole church got busy after that and a personal canvass of every member was made and as a result last March they reported $5,000 as the missionary collection for the year. They never had more than eight hundred dollars a year before—and to think that all this missionary money was on deposit in his bank. Then old David Bruce, the elder, had deposited the savings of his life-time with Dilicum's bank also, and indeed I don't know how many more of the Church people.

"What caught old David was Dilicum's strict orthodoxy. W. G. Hale quit going to church and the church people felt rather sore when he gave up his pew, and some of them called him a skeptic, but I don't know. W. G. would never say much about his reasons, and I for one do not think he had lost his faith in God, for he has, on different occasions, invited the Salvation Army to conduct their meetings on his lawn. He told me one day that he believed they were sincere and were actually accomplishing more good than all the churches put together and that while he liked our

last minister as a man, he could not stand his preaching, for he always felt while listening to him that he avoided striking right home—perhaps he did," continued the Doctor. "His specialty was opiates, and the majority of the cases called for a surgical operation, but I must now go and see W. G."

Jean St. Claire remained silent for some time after the Doctor had gone, while Mrs. Maclaren busied herself arranging her handbag.

"Jean, you are surely in a brown study. I fear your thoughts are far away in Glasgow with——"

"No, indeed, I was just thinking of the awful distress at Mapleton among the mill hands occasioned by this Dilicum bank crash. To think, that that man had the callousness to decamp with all their hard-earned savings!"

"It is too bad, indeed," said Mrs. Maclaren, "and the Government ought to exercise a stricter supervision over all these private banks. The Doctor was telling me yesterday that two other private bankers in the province of Quebec had also gone wrong and that Edward Arnold's private bank in Mapleton had closed its doors."

"No—surely not!" exclaimed Jean; "and he was steward of the Methodist Church."

"Well, his case was not quite so bad as Dilicum's," replied Mrs. Maclaren, "after the Dilicum smash the air was electric with panic and old Ed. Arnold, realizing that his bank was in no condition to weather a storm, made over all his assets to the Canadian Bank, and the following morning when the depositors stormed his bank door they read the notice:

"'THIS BANK HAS TRANSFERRED
ALL ITS BUSINESS TO THE
CANADIAN BANK.
ALL PERSONS HAVING BUSINESS
WITH THIS BANK WILL HAVE
THEIR ACCOUNTS SETTLED AT ITS
OFFICE ON WALLACE STREET.'

"The next morning as the Methodist minister walked down town he ran into his trusty steward and upon inquiring about his affairs, which were the talk of the town, Ed replied with his usual unctuousness, 'Yes, pastor, I have gone out of the banking business and now I'm going to live nearer to my God!'"

As Mrs. Maclaren pronounced the words "to my God," the air-brakes were applied to the train

and a grinding noise, like the creaking of a great furnace door turning upon its angry hinges, was heard beneath the car.

"Mapleton—Mapleton," shouted the trainman.

CHAPTER II

THE CALL

JAMES MUIR was sitting alone in his small room on the third story of a stone front house, which crowded itself against the pavement of Hudson Bay Hill in the City of Mere des Villes. On the right-hand side of the massive oak door which opened from the street might be read in black enameled letters impressed upon a square brass plate the name, JOHN HUTCHINSON, DENTIST. The row of buildings of which this house marked the center had half a century before been the fashionable homes of the best blue blood of Mere des Villes, but that City had changed with the years and the sides of MOUNT ALLAN had allured the families who were known by the historic names at one time familiar upon these doors. Two massive churches still lingered upon either side of the Hill thoroughfare, standing like sentinels, casting a solemn glance upon the passers-by—and they mostly passed by, for

at this time in the City of Mere des Villes neither the Church of John Knox nor the Church of James Martineau any longer cast the spell over the people that had been their wont in days gone by and the glory also of the gray stone front houses above them had departed. These houses were now almost entirely given over to Doctors' offices and Florists' shops—not that there was any reason to infer that the Florists' business was promoted by the Doctors who dealt out pills and plasters to their patients in the adjoining houses. It had just happened that way.

When James Muir had returned to Mere des Villes from pursuing his Post-Graduate studies in Edinburgh, as he said himself, his head was full but his pocketbook had become correspondingly empty, and big-hearted John Hutchinson, the dentist, had invited him to make himself as comfortable as might be in the attic room of his house, at a figure sufficiently small to suit the young preacher's attenuated pocketbook and at the same time large enough not to offend his Scotch pride.

James Muir had just finished reading the evening paper when a knock was heard at the door and into his room walked the dentist's servant man, extending in his hand a large blue envelope

and saying with a rich Irish brogue, "Letther fur you, sor—yer signature, plase—shure, an' its reggisturred."

"Registered, Patrick!" exclaimed Muir. 'I wonder who can be sending me so much money."

"Shure, sor, an' don't they reggisturr sommonses as well as money in this counthree?" And then added, with a twinkle in his eye, "it's most loikley a sommons, sor."

"Or perhaps a call, Patrick" said Muir, with a smile. "Thank you, Patrick."

"You're welcome, sor."

Opening the envelope and taking in his hand a long document on which there were scores of signatures in as many different hand-writings, Muir observed that a sheet of note paper had fallen to the floor. Picking it up, he read the following words written in a very careful hand:

"Dear Mr. Muir:

"I am enclosing to you the 'Call' which has been unanimously and heartily extended to you by the Congregation of St. Giles' Church, Mapleton. While two other names were offered in nomination, the ballot resulted in 146 votes in your favor, with only 5 votes divided between the other two candidates, and these votes represented only two families. That these people had no objection to yourself is indicated by the fact that when the ballot had been announced on motion of a gentleman representing one

of these families and seconded by the representative of the other, this 'Call' in your favor was made unanimous. It is not usual in our Presbytery for a Congregation as large and influential as St. Giles to call so young a minister as yourself, but this is apparently the will of the people, and I would very heartily congratulate you. You will find a great work to do in Mapleton, and the Presbytery, earnestly hoping that you would accept this call regarding it as a call from God, has provisionally on your acceptance of the same set the date for your Ordination and Induction upon the third of next month at four o'clock in the afternoon. On that day the Presbytery will meet in special session within the vestry of the Church at two o'clock for your Ordination Trials.

"Yours faithfully,

"A. G. Ross,

"Clerk of Safford Presbytery."

Laying this letter aside, Muir proceeded to examine the "CALL"—the first "Call" that he had received, and with deepening interest, line by line, he read the solemn words:

"We, office-bearers and members of the Congregation of St. Giles' Church, Mapleton, Ontario, being communicants, desirous of promoting the glory of God and the good of His Church, being destitute of a fixed pastor, and being satisfied by our experience of the piety, literature, ministerial abilities and prudence, and also to the suitableness to our edification of the gifts of you, Reverend James Muir, B.A., B.D., have agreed to invite as we by these presents do invite and call you, and on your acceptance of this our 'Call,' we promise you due respect, encouragement and obedience in the Lord and further

engage to contribute to your suitable maintenance as God may prosper us.

"In Witness whereof we have subscribed this CALL on this the fifth day of January in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ninety-three." [1]

The winter twilight was fading into darkness as Muir finished reading these words—indeed, it was now too dark for him to decipher the long list of names appended. Leaning back in his chair, and still holding the CALL in his hand, he closed his eyes. He was deeply moved; something had told him that this was the voice of God commanding him to launch out into the deep, and that this command he must obey. The opportunity for which throughout all his college years he had sought to qualify himself, and which had been both desired and dreaded by him, had now at length appeared. His thoughts wandered back through the halls of memory, and he gazed again upon the old familiar scenes of his boyhood.

Years before, when seated in the old Scotch Kirk of his boyhood, "St. Columba's of the Chateauguay," he had heard a voice which had penetrated to the very depths of his soul, and he had beheld a vision that had disturbed his former contentment.

[1] From "Rules and Forms of Procedure."

That Congregation had, the week previously, been strangely moved by the burning message of Robertson of Erromanga. Sunday evening came, and as the venerable minister, Reverend David Williamson, faced his congregation his noble features glowed with a light that was strangely impressive, and the congregation was more than ordinarily attentive as he announced the words of his text,

> "The Harvest is great and the Laborers are few."

With chaste, yet moving eloquence, he pictured the vast needs of the world and the lamentable scarcity of ministers. In the course of his earnest discourse he related a story in the life of the great Scottish Reformer, John Knox. He vividly described the ancient Cathedral of St. Andrews and that never-to-be-forgotten Sunday upon which John Knox, as he sat in the congregation, was startled and abashed by the direct appeal of John Rough, who summoned him publicly to come forth as a preacher of the Holy Evangel, saying: "John Knox, in the name of God and of His Son Jesus Christ and in the name of those here present who call you by my mouth, I charge you that you refuse not this

holy vocation, but that you tender the glory of God, the increase of Christ's Kingdom, the edification of your brethren, and the comfort of me, whom you understand well enough to be oppressed with the multitude of labors, that you take upon you the public office and charge of preaching, even as you look to avoid God's heavy displeasure and desire that He shall multiply His Graces with you." And then the Reverend David Williamson added, with a solemnity never to be forgotten: "Would to God that this night the Spirit of the Living God might by the memory of these words, and by the vastness of the world's need, incline some young man to answer the call of God as did John Knox, the great founder of our Scottish Presbyterian Church"; and, repeating his text, "The Harvest is great and the Laborers are few," he earnestly prayed that God would send forth laborers into His vineyard, and then announced as the closing psalm the familiar words so often sung by Scottish congregations—

> "My closed lips, O Lord, by Thee
> Let them be opened.
> Then shall thy praises by my mouth
> Abroad be published."

After the benediction had been pronounced,

James Muir, who had been deeply moved, sought the solitude of the fields, and, coming home to the Manse at a late hour, he found that house in darkness. A huge oak tree, whose giant size testified that it had guarded the Manse for many a year while successive ministers had come and gone, offered him a retreat as dark and silent as a cloister beneath its wide branches. Standing beside it, James Muir kept repeating to himself the words of the evening Text and Psalm,

"The Harvest is great!
The Laborers are few!
My closed lips!"

and then, looking up through the sheltering branches, whose trembling leaves, under the breath of the night air, seemed to symbolize the moving of the Spirit of God, he repeated again and again,

"The Harvest is great!
The Harvest is great!
The Laborers are few!
The Laborers are few!
My closed lips!
My closed lips!"

and then, just as the moon shot its beams through the clouds and covered the greensward with its peaceful light, falling down on his knees upon

the cold earth as with a complete abandonment, he poured out his soul, crying aloud:

"O Lord, open thou my lips and my mouth shall show forth Thy praise."

James Muir, like John Knox, had answered the call, and the mystery of discipleship was once again repeated as he that night resolved to leave all and follow Christ.

Up to that period in his life his thoughts had been set on journalism, in which he had already, though only a lad, given evidences of more than ordinary ability; but now he had heard a voice and seen a vision, and the current of his life had been changed, as it were, by a miracle—the miracle of an answered prayer—a prayer prayed by a woman, his mother, who, on the night of her death, after looking upon the blue-eyed, flaxen-haired babe of her agony, had committed her child, so soon to be orphaned, to the Father of the fatherless, and had prayed that he might be kept from evil like the child Samuel of old, and that in the years to come he might by the grace of God become a mighty prophet of the Most High.

At length James Muir, rising from his knees, sought his room within the Manse. His limbs

were stiff, for he had long been kneeling on the ground; the night was far spent, the morning was at hand, and now at last it was light.

After devoting years to study and preparation, the seal of God had been set to this call of the Spirit by the recent action of the congregation of St. Giles.

Rising, and putting on his overcoat, he went out, but not to the restaurant where he usually dined. Taking the car uptown to Sherwood Street, he made his way to the home of a wealthy New York family whom business reasons had compelled to reside in the City of Mere des Villes.

"Oh, Muir, come in! Glad to see you, dominee! But you look as if you had seen a ghost. Come and join us in the dining room." And when the coffee had been served and the children had retired, Muir related the news of his "Call," and, taking from his pocket the large blue envelope, he handed it to the host.

"Orthodox blue, all right, Muir," said the host. "Ordination Trials at 2 P. M. Ahem! Take care, Muir—these preachers will scalp you—verbal inspiration, you know—Methuselah lived to be 999 years old, and all that sort of thing! Ha, ha! You'll have to swallow it all, confes-

sion of faith included. Well, make one big gulp of it—that's what Ranny of Glasgow, I understand, advised young Foran to do—swallow it whole, just as you would an oyster!"

"Why, Carl!" reprovingly exclaimed his wife, whose orthodoxy was only surpassed by the kindness of her heart. "You are simply incorrigible. I do wish you would read Doctor Payson's book on the 'Fundamentals of our Christian Faith.'" At which words Carl Klemperer uttered a laugh.

"You need not laugh, Carl," insisted his wife. "I myself always enjoy Doctor Payson's books. His arguments are always logical, and he supports so strongly the point of view mother always believed in."

Carl Klemperer was too much of a gentleman to reply that to his way of thinking the said Dr. Payson was an old fossil, the sort of mechanical genius who would have made a first-class defender of the Ptolemaic theory of the universe. So he simply replied: "Well, Muir, I wish you all sorts of luck. I had hoped that you might have decided to go into business, but I fancy the die is set now. All the same, I fear you will find out that nowadays people are more interested in things than in ideas. If you are short of cash, drop into the office any day be-

tween one and two. People, you know, are always liable to be economical when the matter of their souls is concerned."

"Oh, well," replied Muir, "if the good people see that the preachers never get too much the good Lord will see that they never get too little."

"Let us go up to the library," said Klemperer, and, as he led the way, he added: "Mulner's new German work on the miracles has just come in, and it knocks many of the old orthodox theories higher than a kite."

CHAPTER III

THE ORDINATION OF MR. JAMES MUIR

IN February, 18—, the long cold spell that had held all nature for weeks as in a vise, had broken and a mild night was followed by a springlike morning. Towards noon the sky became overcast, and great, soft flakes of snow, which dissolved as soon as they touched the pavement, were falling as the members of Safford Presbytery made their way to St. Giles' Church.

Muir entered the vestry promptly at two o'clock, alone. Among all the clerical faces which eyed him critically as he walked to a chair in the far end of the room there was only one with which he was familiar, and the presence of that one strong, friendly countenance, which shot a quick, encouraging glance in his direction as he took his seat, restored to him his usual composure.

This man was one of the most outstanding educationists in Canada, and had been for many

years Principal of the Theological College located in the City of Mere des Villes. Through his classes Muir had passed with high honors prior to his post-graduate studies in Edinburgh.

After the Court had been called to order by two sharp taps on the table, the Moderator rose and saying reverently, "Let us pray," offered the following Invocation:

"Almighty and everlasting God, who by thy holy Spirit didst preside at the first meeting of the Apostles and Elders at Jerusalem, and dost still inhabit the whole company of the faithful; mercifully regard, we beseech Thee, thy servants chosen and gathered before Thee at this time as a Court of Thy Church. Shed down upon them all heavenly wisdom and grace; enlighten them with the true knowledge of thy word; inflame them with a pure zeal for thy glory; and so order all their doings through thy good Spirit that unity and peace shall prevail among them; that truth and righteousness shall flow from them; and that, by their endeavors, all Thy ministers and churches shall be established and comforted, Thy Gospel everywhere purely preached and truly followed, Thy Kingdom among men extended and strengthened and the whole body of Thine elect people grow up into Him who is the Head over all things to the Church, Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen." [1]

[1] Prayer from "Presbyterian Forms of Service." Issued by Devotional Service Association in connection with the United Presbyterian Church. Edinburgh: MacNiven and Wallace, 1899.

When the "Amen" had been pronounced the Moderator and other members of the Court, who had been standing during the prayer, resumed their seats; whereupon, the Moderator addressing the Court said:

"Fathers and Brethren, we are assembled here to-day for the purpose of taking on Trial for Ordination to the Office of the Ministry our young brother, Mr. James Muir, and should his Trial be sustained of Ordaining and Inducting him minister of St. Giles. Mr. Muir is now present with us, and I take pleasure in presenting him to this Court."

At this point in the proceedings, Muir rose respectfully from his chair:

"Thank you, Mr. Muir; please be seated. Fathers and Brethren, what is your pleasure?"

After a moment's pause the Reverend Malcolm McLennan of Zorra Church, Safford, rose and, addressing the Moderator, said: "Moderator, I move you that, inasmuch as the candidate has already been licensed to preach the Gospel within the bounds of our Church by the Presbytery of Mere des Villes and is widely known for his intellectual attainments, we therefore dispense with the formality of an examination, authorize his Ordination, and proceed to take up the other items on the docket."

"A wud second that motion, Moderator," said the senior elder of St. Giles.

Upon this, there was a murmur heard around the vestry and the Reverend Fulton Small, who himself had been an unsuccessful candidate for the pulpit of St. Giles, and whose clerical collar rather than his features suggested that he also was a minister, rose abruptly and said, with a thin metallic tone in his voice, "Moderator, I would like to remind Mr. McLennan that the examination of a candidate who appears before any of our Presbyteries is no formality. It is an old and honored custom in our church and dates back to the Reformation times. I would also remind our brother that after the Reformation in Scotland Theological students were compelled to go abroad to the Continent for their course in Divinity. The Colleges of that time in Scotland only taught the humanities and the founders of our great and honored church very properly appointed Ordination Trials for every Theological graduate of Geneva or other Continental schools who returned to Scotland to enter upon the active ministry of the Church.

"How else save by a searching examination were the Church Fathers to satisfy themselves that the Theological attainments of the candi-

dates were adequate, nay more, how else could they be sure that, under the tuition and influence of foreign professors they had not imbibed heretical opinions? I move in amendment that this Court proceed to fulfil its duty according to the Rules and Forms of procedure which prevail amongst us and take the candidate upon Trial for Ordination."

This amendment was immediately seconded by his own elder who had that morning driven in with the Reverend Fulton Small from the Parish of Awabac in the Queens bush. This elder added that it was well known that this particular young candidate had studied under Marcus Dods, whose orthodoxy had been at times questioned.

"Question—Question!" resounded throughout the vestry, and the amendment of the Reverend Fulton Small was carried by a large majority.

The Moderator forthwith called upon the Clerk to read the names of those who had been charged by the Presbytery with the examination of candidates. For some reason the name of the Reverend Fulton Small did not appear on the list of examiners. For an hour and a half, James Muir, standing up and facing the Court, was subjected to a continuous fire of questions which were propounded by the various examiners. To his credit,

be it said, he did not once fall down, but with a perfect composure replied quickly and accurately to all the several questions.

"I move that the Trials of the candidate be sustained," at length said the Reverend Murray Donaldson, but before the motion had been seconded, the Moderator interjected, "Perhaps some other brethren desire to ask the candidate some questions."

After a moment's pause the Reverend Fulton Small called out with his thin metallic voice, "Yes, I would like to ask the candidate some questions," and forthwith fired at his victim question after question, all of a more or less catchy nature.

To all of these questions Muir making satisfactory reply, it was observed that the venerable Principal, who was quietly sitting at the side of the vestry, with eyes cast down as though ashamed, slowly stroked his long gray beard.

At last the Reverend Fulton Small, still hungry for blood, returned to the charge and bitingly shot at Muir the words, "What is Traductionism?"

Quick as a flash, but in very quiet tones, Muir replied, "I beg your pardon, but I do not think I heard the question correctly. May I ask you to

repeat it to me?" "Oh, yes, I'll repeat it," said Reverend Fulton Small, with a gleam of satisfaction in his eyes; "What is Traductionism?"

Muir turned his head slowly to the Moderator, after casting his eye around the vestry, and said, "Moderator, I have given careful attention to the Divinity Lectures of Professor Flint of Edinburgh and also for three years to the learned Theological Expositions of the distinguished Principal, who is with us to-day. I have also read the Theological Works of Dorner and Shedd and Hodge, and I must confess my utter ignorance of the term 'Traductionism.' "

The Moderator, who had not been following the Reverend Fulton Small's questions any too closely, said, "Mr. Small, what was your question?"

"A very simple question, indeed," exclaimed the irate preacher; "any one pretending to a knowledge of theology ought to be able to answer it. My question was, 'What is Traductionism?' "

At this point, Muir, addressing the Moderator, said, "Theologians have used the term 'Traducianism'—perhaps that is what the gentleman means."

"That's what I mean," stammered out the Reverend Fulton Small, coloring crimson, but his

question remained unanswered, for the demure divines, all save one, were busy just at that moment repressing smiles—all save one, and he had other thoughts to occupy his attention. He asked no more questions of Muir, whose Trials were heartily sustained by the Presbytery.

But the organ could now be heard; the congregation was assembling and the members of the Presbytery adjourned into the Church, all of them, with the exception of the Reverend Alexander Henderson, Moderator, and the Reverend Principal MacIvor, who had come all the way from the City of Mere des Villes to Ordain his former student.

Alexander Henderson was the minister of Perth and Dunkeld Churches, and had the reputation of being the most scholarly member of the Presbytery.

The more orthodox of the brethren had at times whispered among themselves that "Henderson was not sound on the Fundamentals," but his popularity was so great among the Highlanders of Dunkeld, whose hearts he had completely won by speaking the Gaelic, that he was not likely ever to be charged with heresy.

Some five years previously, when he had been accused of what was known as Moderatism and

was regarded as somewhat lacking in evangelical zeal, the people of the Perth Congregation, who were Lowlanders and intensely evangelistic, had become dissatisfied with Henderson, and one of their elders, Henry Moir by name, had reported to the Presbytery that "Henderson was not preaching the Gospel," whereupon the Presbytery had appointed a special meeting at Perth for the purpose of investigating the whole matter. The Highlanders from Dunkeld congregation appeared that day in full force and it was apparent that they had come with blood in their eyes.

None of them understood a word of English except Roderick MacTaggart, their leader, and even his knowledge of that "dialect," as he himself termed it, was scant indeed.

As Roderick entered the Church, at the head of his clansmen, one of them whispered to him, "Give it to them, Roddy; you'll not be afraid to speak up for the Henderson."

To this Roderick answered but one word, "Wait," and his lips closed like a vice.

Testimony was offered, in due course, to the Court by Mr. Moir, the elder of Perth, that "Mr. Henderson had not been preaching the Gospel," and further that "he had lost the love of some of the Congregation at Perth, and there-

fore it had become his painful duty to ask the Presbytery upon behalf of the Session of Perth to have Mr. Henderson removed."

As Moir gave his evidence, Roderick eyed him with a look as dark as Egypt.

He did not understand all the charges, not being well acquainted with the English, but he did appreciate that Elder Moir was attacking his beloved minister.

"A dirty hypocrite, he is," Roderick muttered to MacDonald, who sat beside him.

"Yes," said MacDonald. "He'll make the long-faced prayers and take round the sacrament to the Sassenach, but for why did Jessie Munro fly out of his house at night and run all the way home through the cold rain and dark—and she's never been to the Kirk since—poor Jessie, and she was such a peautiful girl."

"Is Mr. Roderick MacTaggart present?" called out the Moderator.

Roderick stood up.

"Mr. MacTaggart," said the Moderator, addressing himself to this Highlander, "Mr. Moir has informed the Court that the Minister, the Reverend Mr. Henderson, has not been preaching the Gospel, and moreover that he has lost the love of the people—what do you say to that?"

Roderick did not know what the English word "Gospel" meant. He understood that the charge was that the people had lost their love for Henderson. Drawing himself up to his full height, he said, looking hard at the Moderator, "Moderator, I will ask Mr. Moir for what reason Jessie Munro, the peautifulest girl in our settlement, ran away from his house at twelve o'clock one night, yes, the night that Mrs. Johnston's baby died and Mrs. Moir was stopping with her?"

"Order, order!" shouted Moir, who had turned as pale as a ghost, but the impetuous Highland stream had broken loose and Roderick shouted out, "Moir, Moir—he is a villain. Henderson—Henderson not preach ta Gospel!—We don't want ta Gospel—we want ta Gaelic, and any man that wouldn't love the Henderson wouldn't love God."

Since that never-to-be-forgotten day no other man had ever had the temerity to accuse Reverend Alexander Henderson of heresy.

CHAPTER IV

"YE GATES, LIFT UP YOUR HEADS ON HIGH"

LET us unite in the public worship of God by singing to his praise a part of the twenty-fourth psalm beginning with the third verse."

Who is the man that shall ascend into the hill of God?
Or who within his holy place shall have a firm abode?

Whose hands are clean, whose heart is pure, and unto vanity
Who hath not lifted up his soul, nor sworn deceitfully.

He from th' Eternal shall receive the blessing him upon,
And righteousness, ev'n from the God of his salvation.

Ye gates, lift up your heads on high; ye doors that last for aye,
Be lifted up, that so the King of glory enter may.

As the Reverend Alexander Henderson read these words a solemn hush crept over the congregation and as the words of the last verse were sung it seemed that day to James Muir as though

the gates of heaven had been thrown wide open and that he saw with his own eye the King in all His Glory and the Redeemed of the Lord around the Throne.

After prayer the minister announced as his text these words from the psalm:

> "I have laid help upon one that is Mighty—
> I have exalted one chosen out of the people,"

together with the words from the Gospel:

> "Ye did not choose me, but I chose you and ordained you, that ye should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide."

The opening and closing words of the sermon which followed made the deepest impression upon Muir and remained in his mind.

"The doctrine of Election is announced by these words. This doctrine runs through all the pages of Scripture like a thread of gold.

"From the days of Abraham down to the present time we observe in every age a line of chosen men; first a man, then a family, then a nation, then upon the stalk of that nation there blossomed one perfect flower—the Elect-Race-Man in whom all nations of the earth shall be blessed. In both the Old and New Testaments the Elect of God were elected to serve.

"The Elect are not elected for their own sakes, but for the sake of the Non-Elect, and the only evidence that they are elected is produced by their seeking to save the Non-Elect.

"As Freemantle has affirmed in 'The World the Subject of Redemption,' the principle of election is always apparent. By this is not meant an arbitrary selection of individuals or of nations to be made happy or good, while the rest are excluded; but their call to preeminent service, often to preeminent suffering, with a view to the final inclusion of the rest."

And then Moderator Henderson concluded his sermon with these words:

"All life is mediatorial—all life is vicarious—from end to end in saving our own souls, we are working for others' salvation.

"When the enemy comes in like a flood and when evil presses us sore, is this not enough to nerve us to nobler efforts?

"For my brethren's sake, I will stand firm; for them I will hold the fort; for them I will seal the covenant—aye, if need be crimson, with my blood."

Such was the general argument of his discourse.

At the close of the sermon the Moderator slowly descended the pulpit steps, and taking his place behind the Communion Table announced:

"Mr. James Muir, your minister elect, having sustained his Ordination Trials this day before the Presbytery of Safford, will now take upon him the solemn vows of his Holy Office as a Minister of Jesus Christ, in the Presbyterian Church."

At these words, Muir rose and, advancing towards the Communion Table, stood facing the

Moderator and in front of the vast congregation.

He was of athletic build, almost six feet in height, and proportionately broad across the shoulders, his head, which was unusually large, was covered with an abundance of hair and as the setting sun streamed in through the western window and shone upon it, it looked like beaten gold.

Addressing him, the Moderator propounded the usual questions, concluding with:

"Do you engage in the strength of the Lord Jesus Christ, to live a holy and circumspect life, and faithfully and diligently to discharge all the duties of the Ministry to the edification of the body of Christ?" [1]

Muir having made satisfactory response, the Moderator, turning to the Congregation, said:

"If any person has objections to offer against the life or doctrine of James Muir let him appear before the Presbytery now in session and lodge certification thereof with proof." [1]

No word of objection having been offered, Muir knelt down, the members of Presbytery encircled him, and placing their hands upon his head, he was solemnly ordained by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery and the following

[1] "Rules and Forms of Procedure."

prayer which was offered by the Venerable Principal of the College in Mere des Villes—the Reverend Donald MacIvor:

"O Lord God Almighty whose name is holy, we thank thee for the unspeakable gift of thy Son Jesus Christ and for the word of truth by which he has been revealed to us as the Savior.

"We bless thee for Thy love to the Church. Thou hast been her strength in weakness, her light in darkness, her defense in the day of evil, and the source of her patience, faith and triumph in all ages.

"With the laying on of the hand of the Presbytery do thou endue thy servant with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, fill him with the wisdom and patience, the love and gentleness of Christ, and may the blessing of those who are ready to perish fill his soul with joy." [1]

As James Muir rose up from his knees the Moderator of Presbytery gave him the right hand of fellowship, saying:

"In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only King and Head of the Church, and by the authority of the Presbytery of Safford, I invite you to take part of this Ministry with us, induct you to the pastoral charge of this congregation, and admit you to all the rights and privileges thereto pertaining." [2]

[1] Prayer from "Presbyterian Forms of Service." Issued by the Devotional Service Association in connection with the United Presbyterian Church. Edinburgh: MacNiven and Wallace, 1899.

[2] "Rules and Forms of Procedure."

After the other members of Presbytery had also given Muir the right hand of fellowship the Congregation was dismissed with the doxology and benediction, and as they passed out each member was presented to the new minister, who stood at the door of the Church.

CHAPTER V

MAPLETON FIRESIDES

I

MR. JOHN MACGREGOR'S

AFTER the Ordination service the various members of Presbytery, who had not left Mapleton by the evening train were entertained in the hospitable homes for which that city was noted.

James Muir, now the Reverend James Muir, had been invited by the Senior Elder of St. Giles, Mr. John MacGregor, to dine with him at Sunnybrae. The fact was, old John already had, as his guest, the Reverend Principal MacIvor, and being a man of few words, he rather dreaded the entertaining of this distinguished clergyman alone.

It had occurred to him that Muir might help to make the evening pass, and then deep down in his heart there was still another reason.

With his proverbial Scotch caution he coveted the opportunity of studying Muir.

At luncheon that day, the Reverend Principal MacIvor, with his usual forethought for the comfort of his students, had remarked that "Muir was a fine young man, that he had been brought up in an old Scotch Manse, and that it was to be hoped that inasmuch as he was not so fortunate yet as to be married, he might be invited to make his home with some private family, where he would have the necessary quiet and seclusion to prepare his sermons."

This remark proved to be a "word in season"; it found lodgment in Mrs. MacGregor's big heart and started her thinking. So it had happened that, after luncheon, taking her husband aside, she remarked to him, "we micht ask the new Meenister ta stay wi' us, John.—An' sure oor house is big eneuch an' sairly empty syne oor ain bairns hae flitted ta hames o' their ain, an' it's jist lonesome eneuch ta see a' thae rooms shut up."

To this her husband had replied, "Too bad that Agnes mairrit that ne'er-da-weel, Jack Brewster. She was aye a' bonnie lass an' he's a guid for naething—but she wud hae him an' he's drinking again worse than iver an' John's wife will aye keep him poor, am thinkin, she's so extravagant,

wi' a' her new-fangled notions."

"That's a fac'," said his wife, with a strong Scotch accent, "but Am jist thinkin' that Mr. Muir wull be takin' Brewster in hand an' may be Jack micht stap his drinkin' yet. A've often prayed to God for him an' las' nicht A' got a verse that seemed like an answer frae Heaven. Gin we had the Meenister stayin' wi' us, he wud get ta ken Jack in a freendly way—no jist i' tha way o' pastoral formalities, an' he micht hae a better chance to influence him."

"Weel, A'll bring him hame tha nicht for dinner," answered John, "an' we'll see what kind o' a man he is oot o' tha pulpit, an' afterwards if yer o' the same way o' thinkin', A'll no say that yer not ta gie him the spare room wi' tha wee room across the hall for a study."

After the dinner had been served, John MacGregor led the young minister into the library, his wife coming in a few moments later with the Principal, who had remained to admire a massive clock that stood on the mantel. This clock was patterned in heavy bronze after the architectural lines of the tower of Westminster Abbey, and had chimes whose mellow sound reminded one of the tones that daily peal from its bells and fall like benediction on the people who

traverse the streets below.

"Ye ken John's brither was laid away there," said Mrs. MacGregor to the Principal.

"A great man of God," answered the Principal, "and a dauntless explorer whose labors added one million square miles to the known world. I suppose you have some of his personal belongings."

"Oo, aye," replied Mrs. MacGregor, "his sister sent John the brown great coat that he wore on his last journey in Africa. A'll tell Mary ta bring it inta tha library."

"I wish you would," said the Principal; "it would, indeed, be a very great privilege to see it."

"Oh, ye can pit it on," said Mrs. MacGregor, adding, "it's big an' roomy."

Soon after they entered the library, the maid came in, carrying over her arm the brown great coat which had belonged to David MacGregor, and handed it to the Principal. Thrusting his arms through the sleeves, he said, with a tone of reverence in his voice:

"To think that these sleeves once covered the arms of him who struck the shackles from the slaves," and then buttoning the coat about his chest, he added, "and this very coat covered the bravest heart that Scotland ever gave to the

world. Have you any of his letters?"

"Oo, aye—John has mony o' them," then addressing herself to her husband, she said, "John wull ye no let tha Principal see some o' David's letters?"

Opening the great steel safe, which was built into the wall of the library, John MacGregor brought out a packet of letters and selecting one which David had written to his grand-nephew, Robert, who was but a child of eleven at that time, he said, "If A' had ma specs A' wud read it ta ye, Principal MacIvor."

"Never mind your spectacles, Mr. MacGregor," replied the Principal. "Mr. Muir has good eyes; let him read the letter aloud," and as they all sat down around the fireplace, Muir read as follows:

BANGOLA VALLEY.

My dear Robert:

I was very much pleased to receive your letter which was so neatly written and correctly spelled, and I have observed with great satisfaction that you are making good progress in your studies. You have asked me if there are many wild beasts in this country, and I may tell you that there are very, very many. Some days ago as we worked our way through this long valley, we saw great herds of them, but the men found it very difficult to shoot them, for these herds of cattle were always accompanied by flocks of birds, which concealed themselves in the long, coarse, grass where the animals were feeding, and when-

ever a hunter came near they rose up in flocks and, flying swiftly across the herd of cattle, uttered a screeching noise. This alarmed the beasts and they immediately made off as fast as their legs could carry them. The natives call these birds "guardian birds," because they warn the wild animals of danger. And this reminds me that little boys and girls have their "guardian birds," too, little voices which warn them not to do anything that is wrong. Always be warned, Robert, by that little voice that sounds within you and you will grow up to be a brave and true man.

Your affectionate uncle,
DAVID MACGREGOR.

"Conscience," said the Principal, "that 'incorruptible warrior' [1] which God has placed like a sentinel beside the door of every human heart, to proclaim Heaven's law to the soul."

"Aye, aye," answered old John, and then falling into a reminiscent mood, he added, "ye ken after David was laid away in Westminster Abbey A' gaed ower and A' was standin' yin day lookin' at his grave, when a company o' American tourists came up an' they askit tha verger mony questions aboot David. He was an intelligent body an' telt them maistly a' they wanted ta ken, but at last they askit him a question that he cudna answer. He just said that he didna ken. A'

[1] Expression used by George Douglas, D.D., "Discourses and Addresses." William Briggs, Toronto.

was standin' there an' A' cud hae telt them, but they didna ken that A' was his brither an' A' wasna sayin' onything."

"What a pity that they did not know they were standing so near to David's elder brother! Of course, they were not expecting to see him there," said Muir. After a moment's pause he added, lowering his voice with deep solemnity, "We all have an elder brother and He is not far from any one of us."

They sat in silence for some time, before the fire, while the logs burned low. That night old John MacGregor said to his wife, "Am thinkin' ye better say ta tha Meenister that he can hae the spare room an' that we'll be gled ta hae him make his sermons in the wee room across the hall."

II

W. G. HALE'S

The Reverend Alexander Henderson, Moderator of the Presbytery of Safford, at the close of the Ordination Service had walked home arm in arm with W. G. Hale, a well-known citizen of Mapleton. Although they were both men up-

wards of sixty years of age, their erect bearing and energetic strides gave them the appearance of being much younger men.

The friendship that existed between them had continued throughout all the changes of these many years, in fact, from the days of their boyhood, when they had together attended the Parish School of Glen Athol in Scotland, and it was owing to this circumstance that Hale, who some time previously had given up his pew in St. Giles, had been present that afternoon, at the Ordination Service.

Among the business men of Mapleton, Hale was regarded as a man of keen intelligence, a man whose word was as good as his bond, and more than one political orator had met his Waterloo under the fire of his forceful logic.

The women of St. Giles were somewhat divided in their opinions regarding this man; by the more charitable among them, he was regarded as a man who had become most unfortunately unsettled in his religious views, while some others went so far as to say that he was a most dangerous skeptic.

Whatever deviations from the strict path of orthodoxy might characterize his present mental attitude, there was no doubting the fact that as

a boy in the Parish School of Glen Athol, he had been thoroughly grounded in the Holy Scriptures and the Shorter Catechism, by old Doctor Leather, the Parish School Master.

Ephraim Leather, for such was his name, had occupied the dual office in the Parish of Glen Athol of Parish School Master and Clerk of Session in the Kirk and he was strong in the Theology of the times succeeding the Reformation. Holding in common with all Presbyterians of that age that the word of God which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy God, this Doctor Ephraim Leather had almost worshiped the literal words of the Bible in the English version and he insisted that the sacred writers of the Bible were the passive instruments, the amanuenses of the Divine Spirit and were used by the Divine Spirit like a harp or lyre, from which the plectrum elicits whatever tones it will. Thus, these writers being the passive instruments of the Divine Spirit, he held that every word in the Bible was stamped with the seal of infallibility. Nor did he make any allowance for possible errors which might have crept in through the work of translators. Vain of his Latin, he used to sum up his position with great gusto in these

words: "Impulsus ad scribendum," "Suggestio rerum," "Suggestio verborum." Ephraim Leather had accepted the doctrine of the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures and so he had taught in the Parish School of Glen Athol.

It had been his invariable custom to commence the school exercises every morning by the singing of a psalm, the repetition in concert of the Lord's Prayer, and the reading of a chapter from the Word, followed by such expository remarks as the old Domsie felt moved to offer.

For many years after he had gone to his reward, the story was whispered in the Glen, of how William Hale's boy, who was regarded as having been as full of mischief as an egg is full of meat, had on one occasion neatly pasted together two pages in the Bible that always lay on the old School Master's desk, and how one morning the old Domsie, not being aware of the trick that had been perpetrated upon him, soberly read from the Book of Genesis, "and Noah's wife was (turning over the page) three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits broad and thirty cubits deep and pitched within and without with pitch." It seemed to him as he read these words that surely something must be wrong, and carefully adjusting his spectacles, he turned the page back and read

the words over again. Whereupon, in the enthusiasm of his literalism, he exclaimed aloud, "A' never saw it that way before, but it mon be a fac', for it's in the Book."

On the night of the Ordination, after the other members of the Hale household had retired, Hale and his guest sat long in front of the glowing fire, indulging in happy reminiscences of their boyhood.

"You remember old Ephraim Leather!" said Henderson.

"Remember him, I'll never forget the old martinet and the inhuman beating he gave me when I failed to answer the question, 'What is the misery of that estate whereinto man fell?' "

"All mankind, by their fall, lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself and to the pains of hell forever," slowly repeated Henderson.

"That's it," exclaimed Hale, "but who believes a word of it nowadays? To think that men, no matter how decent they are, are irrevocably doomed to all the miseries of this life, and to the pains of hell forever, and all because of the fact that one man centuries upon centuries ago ate the forbidden fruit. Small wonder that, as a boy,

I could not say it. I have never been able to say it and if I believed for a moment that it was true, I would hate God," and then the old hard-headed Scot added beneath his breath, "the pains of hell forever! I would not throw a dog into such a place," and raising his voice, he continued, "yet this and more like it is still the accepted doctrine of the Presbyterian Church. It is in their confession of faith, to which you made Muir swear allegiance this afternoon. Blasphemy! blasphemy! Henderson. I do not understand how you men can stand for such medieval scholasticism. No thinking man, nowadays, really believes in all this seventeenth century stuff. It's high time that the old and antiquated confession was modernized and that the accredited results of modern Biblical scholarship were plainly set forth by the standard of the Church of our fathers. You ministers all take these vows, but how many of you ever intend to fulfil them? What a piece of play-acting for you as Moderator of Presbytery to ask young Muir to-day, 'Do you believe the Westminster Confession of Faith as adopted by the Church in the basis of union to be founded on and agreeable to the Word of God, and in your teaching will you faithfully adhere thereto?' Of course he cannot preach this stuff;

you yourself didn't do it to-day in your admirable sermon on the Doctrine of Election. You said that the Elect were elected for the sake of the Non-Elect—elected to service—that's just what I believe—great men, men who were gifted of heaven far above their fellows, men like Garibaldi and Abraham Lincoln, men who by the might of their gianthood effected the liberties of nations. That is the kind of election which I believe in, and that is what you preached to-day, but that is a very different statement of this doctrine from that which is given in the standards of the church which says that, 'God having out of His mere good pleasure from all eternity elected some to everlasting life did enter into a covenant of grace with them to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer,' [1] and 'the rest of mankind God was pleased according to the unsearchable counsel of His own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures to pass by and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin to the praise of his glorious justice.'

[1] "Confession of Faith," Chapter III, "God's Eternal Decree," Article VII.

"So far as I can see, you cannot find anything in these words from the confession to justify your interpretation of election for service, election for the sake of the Non-Elect. They are by the foreordination of God elected to be saved or elected to be damned and this for the glory of His justice. Why doesn't the church revise it? It's as harsh as the Athanasian Creed of the Church of England with all its damnatory clauses."

"I agree with you, Hale, that there is room in these standards of our church for revision.

"At the same time I think that you have stated your case rather strongly and I am not sure that you yourself, with all your ability in criticism, would be able to draw up a statement of the great doctrines taught in the Bible, which would be open to less objection. All things made by man are more or less characterized by imperfection, and at best we all must admit that we can only here on earth know in part and see, as it were, through a glass darkly. As for the Athanasian Creed, a man of your wide information ought to know that it has already been excluded from the offices of the American Book of Common Prayer of the Episcopal Church in the United States, and I think the time is drawing near even in Canada

when those of us who are living will witness great changes in present church organization and also some modifications in church doctrines. The application of scientific methods to the study of the Bible by our Theological Professors is exerting a wonderful influence throughout the various Evangelical churches of to-day, and it would not surprise me, were we, before many years more have passed by, to see all these separate denominational colleges of the churches federated and the organic union of the churches would speedily follow. When that day shall have come, men will see the new church—the United Church of Canada—rise up in its glory and casting aside the cerements of mummified creeds and clothing herself in fresh garments of light and love, go forth in the morning of a new era, fair as the moon, clear as the sun and terrible as an army with banners."

"I devoutly hope that day may be hastened," exclaimed Hale, and as he uttered the last word, the clock in the tower of St. Giles struck twelve and a new day had been proclaimed.

III

PEMBERTON, OF PEMBERTON VILLA

Mrs. Junius P. C. Pemberton, of Pemberton Villa, was widely known as the leader of the smart set in Mapleton. Not that this distinction quite satisfied her social aspirations, for her insatiable ambition had often whispered in her ear that, had her lot been cast among the high and mighty of the Capital she would have been the bright and ruling star around which all other notables would have circled like satellites. This dream she now knew could never be fulfilled. It had been shattered forever on the day in which she had united her fortunes in wedlock to those of Junius P. C. Pemberton. The said Junius P. C. Pemberton was a man whose one passion had been the accumulation of wealth and in this he had been more than ordinarily successful. Seated in the office of his three-story factory one day in his riper years he had related with pride to a newspaper correspondent the story of how he had worked his way up by his own unaided industry from a humble beginning in a little one-roomed shop to his present estate of wealth. As

he recounted this personal history and concluded his autobiography with the statement that he was a self-made man, he might have added, perhaps, that he worshiped his Maker; so the newspaper correspondent had thought, but when the following week a full half-page in the *Daily Express* was devoted to the story of one of Canada's most successful manufacturers, in the center of which write-up appeared the face of Junius P. C. Pemberton, there was no reference made, however, to his probable self-idolatry. A certain cynic had remarked, as he had read this article, "Successful earwig, I should say," and then added, "Sure old Junius P. C. might have the horse sense to see that they are after his wad for campaign funds."

While the said Junius was not without self-worship, it can be truly affirmed of him that his greatest source of satisfaction was derived from the social triumphs of his wife. She was a tall and graceful woman and had, prior to her marriage with Junius P. C. Pemberton, been the belle of St. Anthony. Gerald Thornton, a young and struggling lawyer of that town, had completely lost his heart to her, but his suit though ardently pursued had proved unavailing, for while she had a certain liking and admiration for him, yet he

was poor and her mother zealously advanced the suit of old Junius P. C., who was old enough to be her father. To the surprise of the dames of St. Anthony and of Mapleton the Pemberton-Campbell nuptials had been announced and Nan Campbell became Mrs. Junius P. C. Pemberton, of Pemberton Villa.

It was not a love match, yet all the parties most interested seemed to be well satisfied. Old Junius himself, because of his young wife's social successes; her mother because she had successfully accomplished her ambition to marry Nan to wealth, and Nan too was fairly well content, for if not in the Capital, at least in her own little world, she was now the representative woman of wealth and social preeminence.

Her contentment, be it said, had not been quite so constant during the past year, for at the last General Election, her rejected suitor, whom she had never quite forgotten, had been elected to Parliament, where he, Gerald Thornton, was increasingly winning name and fame, indeed, he was generally regarded as the coming leader of the House.

About a month after Muir's Ordination, an afternoon tea and reception was given by Mrs. Junius P. C. Pemberton, of Pemberton Villa,

in honor of the return home of her daughter, Vernera, who had been spending the past winter in New York City, pursuing musical studies and incidentally helping her father to get rid of some of his surplus cash.

Petite in appearance, Vernera was nevertheless possessed of a certain piquant vivacity, which was not without attractiveness.

"Oh, yes, Vernera's home again!" said her mother to Judith Kinzie, "and I'm so glad—the house was as silent as a tomb when she was away and the piano was never opened, but she had not been home half an hour when all this was changed and she was warbling Jakobowski's Lullaby. She is utterly devoted to music, you know, and has been singing in the choir of the Church of the Minor Prophets. The Rector, Reverend Doctor Gullem, wrote me last week that he simply adored Vernera and could not possibly get along next season without her, for he is planning to have the Butterfly Guild, as he affectionately terms his choir girls, produce a light opera in the Parish House next autumn in aid of the mission to the lepers."

"Doctor Gullem," exclaimed Judith Kinzie, "what an interesting name for a clergyman—but he surely must be a very different type of man

from the new minister of St. Giles; Mrs. MacGregor was telling mother that Mr. Muir held that all missionary money ought to be subscribed by voluntary contributions and that unless people really felt that they were making a personal sacrifice there was no possible reflex blessing."

Just then Vernera came tripping across the drawing room, radiant with smiles, and catching the last word, "blessing," teasingly said, "Now Judith, you must not begin to preach, Doctor Gullem is just a darling and the Church of the Minor Prophets is so liberal and up-to-date, but do tell me about the new minister; I hear he is both young and good looking and a perfect orator in the pulpit; I think I'll have to join the choir."

"I guess we'll all be roped into the 'Ladies' Mission Study Class,' " exclaimed Edith Carpenter. "Mr. Muir announced last Sunday that he would meet the ladies of the church in Mrs. MacGregor's drawing room on Friday, to organize."

"Well, I never," exclaimed Vernera Pemberton. "Mission Study Classes—sewing circles—and prayer meetings would actually drive me to drink."

"Now, Vernera, you must not speak that way," cautioned her mother. "Mr. Muir is said to be a delightful man, and so enthusiastic in his efforts,

that I rather think we'll all have to reform for the future and be good." She added, turning to the girls, "You know Vernera has been having such a giddy time in New York and her head had almost been turned, so much in demand, and with Dick Van Konet just——"

"Now, mother," interrupted Vernera.

"Well," continued her mother, "didn't Dick drive you to the station in his motor car, and who was it ordered those gorgeous roses and orchids for the stateroom?"

Just then Jean St. Claire entered the room. She was exquisitely gowned in black velvet, wearing a dainty hat whose soft plumes drooped gracefully down over her wavy brown hair.

"Why, Jean," said the girls, surrounding her, "you are just too sweet for anything, but what has kept you so late? We were afraid that you were not coming."

"Oh, I called in to see old Mrs. Bruce and simply could not tear myself away," answered Jean. "She is in such terrible distress. No, I don't think that David can possibly get better, and his mother is just about broken-hearted, and she informed me that Mr. Muir had been so kind and that she was just sure God had sent him to Mapleton to help them in their time of trouble."

"She is a perfect saint," exclaimed Mrs. Pemberton. "I certainly must send her some flowers. I suppose they lost nearly all they had in the Dilicum bank failure."

"I do not think they have been to church since," said Edith Carpenter.

"Oh, yes, old David was there last Sunday," broke in Judith Kinzie, "dressed in a new suit of clothes—somebody must be helping them."

"I question very much that they would accept charity," said Mrs. Pemberton; "they are so proud that I cannot think who would venture to offer them financial help."

"Perhaps it's the new minister," said Jean St. Claire.

"Very likely," exclaimed Mrs. Pemberton. "He seems to be regarded on all sides as the good angel of Mapleton," then turning to Jean she smiled, adding, "I suppose, Jean, that you are already deep into church work?"

"No, I'm not," answered Jean, "but Grandmother is urging me to take up a class in the Sunday School and perhaps I shall do so. You know how ardently Grandmother's sympathies always are on the side of church work."

"Indeed, I do," replied Mrs. Pemberton, "Mrs. MacGregor was just reciting to me to-day of how

on a cold New Year's Eve when the band boys came, as was their annual custom, to serenade your father, who happened to be out on a case that night, your Grandmother had risen and gone out with her hands full of tracts, which she distributed to the members of the band, saying, 'Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I unto thee," and Mrs. MacGregor said that none of the band boys had resented this rather unexpected turn of events, for they all respected Mrs. St. Claire's deep sincerity."

Vernera had wandered off to the piano during this discussion and Edith Carpenter exclaimed, "Oh, let us have some music." "Yes," joined all the girls in unison, "Vernera, you certainly must sing something."

CHAPTER VI

INTO A FAR COUNTRY

SOME twenty years previous to the events already narrated, David Bruce, with his wife and two sons, had been living at Melbourne, where David followed the trade of a cabinet maker, to which he had served his apprenticeship in Scotland, many years before.

When he was upwards of forty years of age, he had loved and married Janet Main, the comely daughter of a widow who had migrated to Western Canada from England with the purpose of improving the fortunes of herself and family.

The adventurous spirit of her eldest son, William, had writhed under the unprogressive atmosphere of that town, and one night he suddenly announced to his mother that he was going to shake its dust off his feet and go to New Mexico. The next morning he was gone. At that time but little was known of New Mexico in Ontario, save that it was said to be a wild and godless country,

and as the stage which carried William Main from Melbourne to Hamilton disappeared over the hills, the hope of ever seeing her son again died in his mother's heart, and rightly so, for she never set eyes upon him again.

For many years no word was heard of him. Meanwhile, after his mother's death, his sister, Janet, with her husband, David Bruce, and their two boys, David and Dick, had left Melbourne and taken up their abode in Mapleton, where David Bruce, Sr., had been elected and ordained an elder in St. Giles.

As their sons grew up to manhood, old David, like the father of Jacob and Esau, had his own misgivings as he thought about his boys.

David, whose only passion, from his childhood, had been music and hunting, had on various occasions participated in several dare-devil scrapes, which had filled the hearts of his father and mother with anguish.

Dick, while not given to splendid transgressions like his fearless brother, had on more than one occasion given evidence of a certain duplicity of disposition which had pierced the hearts of his parents as with a dagger.

As the years had passed, Dick had been articled in the office of a local lawyer, and this man had

one day remarked that Dick was "as sharp as a razor and as cold-blooded as a turtle."

Dick was certainly most regular in his habits and applied himself with unfailing diligence to the duties of the law office, by which assiduity he hoped to win wealth and fame at some future day.

With David it had been quite the reverse. His course of life since leaving school had been most erratic. His father, who was highly respected in the city, had secured for him several good opportunities, all of which, however, he had allowed to slip through his fingers, unimproved. His mind was set on nothing but music and when he was not absent from home on a hunting excursion or spending the nights with the members of the "Stag Club," whose rooms were located in the topmost story of the Queen's Hotel Building, he used to sit in his room till late at night, thrumming the strings of an old harp, of which he had possessed himself, much to his father's irritation and disgust.

Such was the condition of the home of David Bruce and his family, when, one day, between Christmas and New Year's, a letter bearing the Albuk, New Mexico, post mark, and addressed to Mrs. David Bruce, was delivered by the post-

man.

"This must be from William," said Mrs. Bruce to her husband, as she carefully cut the end off the envelope with the large shears that were lying on the table.

"It's a long time since we've heard anything from him," replied old David. "He's not much given to writing and it was a terrible grief to your mother that she could not see him once again before she died. I'll never forget how she moaned in her last prayer, 'God bless William and keep him safe and bring him home to me, for I must see my son again.' He never came back, but I have the feeling that he has always had a thought of us in his heart. It was a pity he never got married, living alone all these years in that new country."

As David had been saying these words, his wife had hurriedly glanced down the pages of the letter which she held in her hand.

At length she said, "David, you better read what he says."

Taking the letter in his hand and adjusting his spectacles, old David read these words aloud:

ALBUK, N. M., December 20th, 1886.

Dear Janet:

As Christmas draws near, my thoughts wander far

across the plains and hills back to Ontario, a land that I can never forget. It is a holy land to me now, for it holds the dust of one whose memory shall always be sacred—our dear mother. I did not know of her last fatal illness until it was all over, and then it was too late. Throughout all these years, I have been living here—in a wild and godless town. We have no church of any denomination to shed a purifying influence among the people. Last year an Irish Priest, Father O'Connor, passed through this town on his way to his Mission among the Pueblo Indians. There had been a washout on the railway where it crossed the Rio Grande, and he was compelled to stay here over a Sunday. The good man celebrated Mass in the saloon—which was the largest room in the town. At that service it was filled with men, Spaniards and Mexicans and Yankees and Niggers, who stood bareheaded, crowded together, as the Priest fulfilled his office. His words were all in Latin, and though I could not understand a word of what he said—strict Protestant as I was—yet it seemed to me as if his voice was the voice of God. I had some conversation with him, after dinner in the boarding house, and never before having had the opportunity to speak to any religious man of my great bereavement in Mother's death, I poured out my heart to him. He must have been a man of God, for when I had concluded, he laid his hand gently upon my shoulder and said, "In Domo Patris Mei Habitationes Multae Sunt," and I asked him what he had said, whereupon he replied, "In my Father's house are many mansions." These words sounded so full of comfort to my sorrowful heart that I asked him to write them down for me, and that night before he left he gave me a white card with the cross impressed on one side and on the other he had written these words from the Gospel and signed his name, P. J. O'Connor, S.J. And now to

come to the more immediate purpose of this letter. I may say that during the past years of my life here I have been prospered. You are aware that I have been engaged in the lumber trade and general supply business. This business has developed beyond my most sanguine expectations and has now assumed proportions far surpassing my own powers of oversight. Honesty is scarcely known among many of the people here, who have neither the fear of God nor of Man in their hearts, and for months I have suffered a considerable loss through the thieving propensities of some of those men in my employ. This came to a head last week, when my shipping clerk, Dick Rifler, decamped to parts unknown after making heavy collections of moneys due to me, all of which he took with him. It has occurred to me that if David were to come to Albuk I could place him in a very lucrative position, in which, as my confidential clerk, he could have charge of this department of my business. I would pay him good wages and would be not a little comforted with the thought that in him I had a man who was strictly honest and who could be trusted. I am growing old and have a physical infirmity which will never leave me, and should David decide to enter heartily into my interests, I have it in mind to make him my heir and successor, as I have neither wife nor child of my own. It is my earnest desire that you and his father should give this matter your serious consideration, and if you decide to permit David to exercise his choice, and should he be willing to follow his uncle to this far away country, his welcome by myself is assured. Think well over it and write me at your early convenience.

Your affectionate brother,

WILLIAM MAIN.

After reading this letter, old David Bruce and

his wife sat in silence for a long time. The twilight shades deepened and still they sat, each busied with thoughts too deep for utterance.

At length old David rose and went out. It was night. The following day he remarked to his wife that he had been thinking over William's letter, and what was her opinion?

Her eyes filled with tears. "What are you thinking, woman?" he inquired.

"Oh," she replied, "I'm sure David is honest and that he would not violate a trust, but you know he's not been acting in the way we would have liked. I fear that there has been drinking going on at these rooms of the Stag Club, above the Queen's Hotel, and though I've prayed many a night for his conversion, I have seen no evidences of a change of heart, and that's such a wild, godless country and they have no minister or churches."

"He never goes to church here," replied her husband, "and I do not think that he could find worse company anywhere than among these lads of the Stag Club, and yet he might commit some reckless act were he to be so far removed from all restraining influences. However, we are growing old and he'll have to shift for himself some day and this may be the hand of Providence held

out to him. I think we had better let him read the letter."

"Just as you say, David," replied his wife, "but I fear if we do that he will fly away."

That night as young David retired to his room, his father handed him his uncle's letter, saying, "Read these lines, and may God direct."

David decided, in the course of the week, to accept his uncle's offer.

His parents understood all, although not a word had been spoken. They had the reserve of the Scotch, who as a race say least when they feel most.

His mother's heart was full but her hands were busy and in the course of a couple of weeks she had packed David's trunk as full as it could hold of such articles of wearing apparel as only a mother's love could devise, and, deep in the center of the trunk, she had placed her own well-worn Bible, which, however, her son never opened during all the future years of his absence from home.

At last the morning arrived upon which he was to take his departure.

The train left Mapleton at the early hour of six o'clock and, being winter time, it was still dark. His father rose at four o'clock and his

mother shortly afterwards, while David appeared just as the breakfast was placed on the table.

The meal was eaten in silence, but the old man insisted that, on that morning, David should have a double portion.

The meal being ended, he said, "Janet, give me the Book," which reverently laying down open before him, upon the table, he said, "let us worship God," and then he read these words:

"My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.

"If they say, come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause;

"My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path:

"For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood."

Closing the Book, he said, "Let us pray."

"Then kneeling down to Heaven's Eternal King,
The saint, the father, and the husband prays;
Hope springs exulting on triumphant wing,
That thus they all shall meet in future days." [1]

The words of that prayer which was offered upon that morning by old David Bruce are no longer known on earth, but they are all recorded in Heaven. Rising from their knees, young David embraced his mother, who simply said, "My dear

[1] "Cottar's Saturday Night," Robert Burns.

boy!" and the father, his face calm yet glowing with a radiance that was not of earth, took his boy's hand firmly within his own and said, "My boy, never take the blood—never—take—the—blood."

CHAPTER VII

ALBUK, NEW MEXICO

I

JUAN ALMANZOR

ALTHOUGH but nineteen years of age, David Bruce was a giant in stature, being somewhat over six feet in height, and proportionately broad. After six months had slipped by, the muscles of his long arms had also developed and he was regarded as the strongest man in the town.

As a boy at home, his favorite sport had been gunning, and many a snipe and woodcock had dropped at the flash of his unerring fire.

His skill and proficiency was now as great with his large Colt's revolver. Easy-going and good-natured as he was by natural disposition, yet all things considered, he was scarcely a man to be trifled with, and this fact was discovered in Albuk before many months had passed.

Taking his meals in the dining room of the one and only boarding house of which the town

boasted, he had fitted up a room for himself above the office in the warehouse.

He was still devoted to music, and that was a day long to be remembered by him on which the express delivery brought to his room a beautiful harp, which he had ordered from Chicago, and many a night, in his room above the office, did he devote himself to his favorite pastime. It so happened that a Spaniard, who had for years been the foremost musician in Madrid and whose execution on the harp had frequently delighted Royalty itself, had drifted to Albuk in the days of his decline and adversity. This man, who in his prime had been a Prince of Harpists, had failed to learn that "it is not for Princes to drink wine, nor for Princes strong drink," and drink had proved his undoing.

This old broken-down musician passed many an evening in the chamber above the office and under his instruction, united to David's enthusiasm and patience, it transpired that the spirit which dwelt within the harp, at once so subtle and sublime, yielded to David's mastership.

One night, as he concluded playing over a theme, the old musician clapped his hands and bounding to his feet, cried out, "Fuega de dios—Grande—Grande."

II

THE THIEVES

Towards the end of the year after a most laborious day, David had flung himself down upon his bed, overcome with fatigue. He had not undressed, only intending to rest awhile before finally retiring. He had, however, fallen sound asleep and about two o'clock in the morning he awakened with a start. He had dreamed that the town was in the throes of an earthquake, and that the building in which he was sleeping had been rudely shaken. Sitting up in his bed and rubbing his eyes, he had almost concluded that this was only a bad dream, when, suddenly, he heard below him in the wareroom a grinding noise, as of a heavy truck being rolled across the floor. Becoming wider and wider awake and listening intently, he was soon assured that it was even so, and making his way stealthily to the head of the stairs, he overheard men conversing in subdued tones. Taking his revolver out of his pocket, he cautiously descended the stairs, and he soon discovered that the large back door of the warehouse had been forced wide open. Backed

up close to it was a wagon, to which a team of mules was attached. Concealing himself in the darkness, inside the door, he awaited further developments, and he had not waited long when two men, pushing a truck heavily loaded, approached the open door. Biding his time, he delayed until they had begun to move the stuff from the truck to the wagon and, just as they were lifting between them a heavy box of goods, he crept stealthily up behind the man whose back was turned to him and with one swinging blow of his fist knocked him senseless to the floor—then quick as a flash, covering the other man with his revolver, whose gleaming barrel could be seen in the moonlight, he commanded, "Hands up." The bandit, uttering a blasphemous oath, surrendered. He proved to be none other than his uncle's former shipping clerk, Dick Rifler, who had become the daring leader of a band of hold-up men. Ordering him to lift his still unconscious mate into the wagon, and keeping him covered with his revolver, he compelled him to drive to the lockup, where these two burglars were lodged for the night. He had not observed as he left the jail that a man who had been watching the whole proceedings was standing on the opposite side of the street in the shadow of buildings. Quickly return-

ing to the warehouse, he closed and made fast the door. Thereupon retiring to his bed, he soon fell sound asleep and in the morning wakened up quite unconscious of the fact that confederates of the thieves, who had been lurking with their horses on the outskirts of the town, had, during the early hours of the morning, effected a jail delivery and the whole band of bad-men had taken to the hills.

III

DICK RIFLER

The name of Dick Rifler and his gang was the terror of those travelers whose business compelled them to journey by stage across the Ozark Mountains, and many a more adventurous but less experienced traveler who had ventured to cross these hills alone on horseback had disappeared, never to be heard of again.

People in the town of Albuk itself for the most part lived in constant terror of their lives. The town marshal, a brave and fearless man, Bob Porter by name, who had gone out on horseback to reconnoiter, had not returned at night and the following morning his horse, frightfully jaded,

was found standing by the stable door, the saddle and bridle missing.

This roused the town and a vigilance committee was immeditaely organized, of which David Bruce was appointed Captain.

These men, dividing up into parties of five, scoured the country, and at length, after a search of many hours, they discovered the body of the town marshal lying upon its back, by the side of a creek, with a gaping wound from a rifle bullet in his forehead. He had been foully murdered and robbed, as he had ridden along the narrow bridle path which wound its way between the creek and a precipitous mountain that crowded down on to its bank.

At a little distance from where the body rested, lying upon the bridle path which led to the hills, was picked up an empty envelope bearing the post mark of Mexico City and addressed to Dick Rifler.

The remains of Bob Porter were that day brought back to the town of Albuk and the following morning, before daybreak, the body of this hero, who in the discharge of his duty had not counted his life dear unto death, was lowered into a grave which had been hastily dug in the sand, and William Main, taking from his pocket

a white card, slowly read the words:

"In domo Patris mei habitationes multae sunt."

In silence the grave was filled and as the last shovelful of sand was heaped upon it, the sun streaming through the mountains flooded the mound with gold, like a benediction from Heaven.

For many months after the killing of Bob Porter nothing was heard of Dick Rifler or his band.

No traces of them had been discovered in the hills by the men of the "Vigilance Committee," and the town resumed its usual routine. The stage that traveled between Albuk and the Mexican border came and went unmolested. The name of Dick Rifler was scarcely ever mentioned, save as some stranger from the East had occasionally made inquiries about him.

A year and more had passed by when one evening a strange woman, mounted upon a splendid Kentucky horse, rode leisurely towards the town and dismounted at a large house on the outskirts which bore a wide if not a virtuous reputation.

The following morning, as David Bruce unlocked the office door, his eye caught sight of a small piece of brown paper carefully folded, which had been thrust underneath it during the night.

Taking it up in his hand and unfolding it, he read these words:

"To David Bruce.

"The dark woman who came here yesterday has gone. She was drinking with two strange men in the room next to mine last night. They all got pretty drunk and noisy, and overhearing your name mentioned, I put my ear to a knothole in the board partition. I could not hear all they said, but my ear caught these words: 'the Vigilants—Bruce—next week—death——' Your life is in danger. That woman is Dick Rifler's special friend. Be on your guard—burn this.

"H. B."

Placing this torn scrap of brown paper upon the top of the stove, he touched a match to it and stood watching while it slowly turned to ashes.

Then taking from his hip pocket an ugly-looking revolver, he examined it carefully, and stepping out into the yard, which was still deserted, he threw a silver dollar up in the air. His arm made a quick swing in its direction and a shot rang out—then walking over to where the coin had fallen, he bent over and picked it up. There was a hole bored through its center. "That shot cost me a dollar," he muttered to himself, and then he added, "I guess it's worth it."

IV

THE COMBAT

About a week later, as David Bruce was returning to the office from the lumber yard, just as he turned the corner of Main Street, he saw Dick Rifler striding towards him. In a moment their eyes met and, with an oath, Dick yelled out, "I've got you at last," and immediately his gun spit fire. In his excitement, however, the bullet missed its mark, and before he could fire a second time his gun had fallen from his hand to the ground.

David Bruce had been too quick for him, and with one swing of his arm had shot the gun from Rifler's hand. He might as easily have bored a hole through the villian's heart, but something checked him—he had seemed in that awful moment to hear the echo of a voice, as the voice of a God, saying, "Never take the blood," "Never take the blood." "Hands up," ordered Bruce as, covering Rifler with his gun, he rushed upon him.

"That's right, that's right," roared Rifler, now utterly at his mercy, "shoot me down like a dog."

"Back away," commanded Bruce firmly, and then kicking the gun, which dropped from Rifler's hand, aside, he threw his own gun upon the ground beside it, while Dick Rifler eyed him with amazement.

"Now then," said Bruce calmly, "I'll not shoot you, but I'll thrash you till you wish you had never seen the town of Albuk or heard the name of Bruce." As he uttered these words, some citizens, attracted by the sound of the shooting, came breathlessly rushing up to where they stood.

"Keep back," roared Bruce; "this fight is between us two—man against man."

The combat began. It was the battle of giants. They struck and clinched and pounded and clinched again and coming down almost to the ground, Rifler, whose strength was yielding, suddenly drove his boot fiercely against Bruce's side, dealing him a terrific kick under the right arm. Bruce turned pale for a moment and his black eyes burned like coals of fire. With one last swing of his powerful arm, he knocked Rifler senseless to the ground.

The end came none too soon for Bruce, for in less than five minutes he too fell down upon the sand, holding his right side with his left arm and moaning in agony.

He was hurriedly carried to his room and there laid upon the bed, where for weeks he remained hovering between life and death, under the care of Doctor Duval.

At times he became unconscious and in his raving was heard by the old Spaniard who tenderly nursed him, to exclaim, "The blood—the blood—Never take the blood!"

"It was a battle of giants," said Tom Bartlett to Ned James, as they stood at the saloon bar that night. "The only thing in all my life I ever saw to compare with it was when the cyclone raced down the valley of the Rio Grande and bombarded Mount La Yoja."

"That was a terrific storm, sure," answered Ned. "The worst we ever saw in the Rio Grande, but it cleared the air."

In the course of the weeks, David Bruce recovered sufficiently to resume his duties in the office, but he sometimes was heard to complain of a dull pain in his side.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF WILLIAM MAIN

WILLIAM MAIN, whose heart had been in a weak condition for some time, received a severe shock when word was brought to him of the awful combat and of the subsequent precarious condition of his nephew, whom he had learned to love as his own soul.

While no one knew better than he that the life of David Bruce was characterized by certain lapses from the paths of virtue, which he could not approve, yet he recognized that these periodic debauches were the results of an excess of vitality rather than the product of an essentially corrupted nature.

Less than a month after the return of David Bruce to the duties of the office, which office William Main was in the habit of visiting every morning at ten o'clock, it transpired that on a certain morning the hands of the office clock

pointed to eleven and as yet William Main had not made his usual appearance.

Engrossed in his duties, David Bruce had not noticed that the forenoon had so far advanced until when reading a business letter which dealt with matters requiring his uncle's personal attention, he observed that he had not yet come in.

Glancing at the clock, he laid this letter down upon the desk, saying to himself, 'Eleven o'clock! and uncle has not come down yet; strange; I wonder what can be keeping him."

This was surely an unusual circumstance, for his uncle's habits, as all the town knew, were as regular as the clock. So, taking his hat, he hurriedly made his way towards that block of buildings in which his uncle had his room, and ascending the stairs, he discovered that the door leading to his uncle's room had not been opened that morning. His boots, which had been shined, were still upon the floor of the hall beside the door, where they had been placed by the Mexican servant, who attended to the rooms in the building.

David knocked at the door, but receiving no answer, tried the handle. The door was locked. Just then the Mexican servant put in his appearance and, on being questioned, replied that, "he had not seen Mr. Main since the night before."

Breaking in the door, they saw the body of William Main lying peacefully, as if asleep, upon the bed. William Main was dead.

Inside his pocketbook was found a sealed letter, bearing on its cover the name of David Bruce. It was the last will and testament of William Main, and it read as follows:

"I, William Main, of Albuk, in the State of New Mexico, being of sound mind and memory, do hereby revoke any and all former wills by me made, and do make, publish and declare this to be my last Will and Testament as follows:

"I direct that all my just debts and funeral expenses be paid.

"I direct that the sum of two thousand dollars ($2,000) be paid to THE REVEREND P. J. O'CONNOR, S.J., to be used by him in whatsoever way he may deem best in support of his mission work among the Pueblo Indians.

"I direct that the sum of ten thousand dollars ($10,000) be paid to my dear sister, Mrs. David Bruce, Sr., of Mapleton, Ontario, Canada.

"I direct that a memorial window be placed in the Presbyterian Church of Melbourne, Canada, in memory of my dear mother. The said window of the value of five thousand dollars ($5,000), to be representative of the cross, with the inscription in Latin 'In domo Patris mei habitationes multae sunt.'

"I give, devise and bequeath unto my dear nephew, David Bruce, all the residue of my estate, both real, personal and mixed, of every kind and wheresoever situated, whether now in my possession, or hereafter to be acquired.

"I hereby nominate and appoint my said nephew, David Bruce, Executor of this, my last Will and Testament, and request that he be required to give no other security as said Executor than his own personal bond.

"I hereby give to my Executor full power and authority to sell, at public or private sale, and to convey any of my real and personal property as he may see fit, and manage and dispose of my said estate the same as I could if living.

"In WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this fifth day of July, A. D. 18—.

"WILLIAM MAIN. [Seal.]

"Signed, sealed, published and declared by the said William Main, on the fifth day of July, A. D. 18—, as and for his last Will and Testament, in the presence of the undersigned, who at his request and in his presence, and in the presence of each other, have hereunto subscribed our name as witnesses thereto.

"ANDREW A. CHARLES.
"JOHN Q. BRYSON.
"WILLIAM M. SUMNER."

CHAPTER IX

FATE SHIFTS THE SCENES

I

THREE HORSEMEN

A YEAR had now elapsed since the sudden death of William Main. His nephew was continuing the business, which he had steadily increased. No word had been heard of Dick Rifler since the day of the combat.

He, too, had been carried unconscious into a house nearby, but in the morning he was nowhere to be found.

Whenever his case was discussed by the men who gathered in the saloon or upon the street corner, the prevailing opinion was expressed that he must surely be dead. Bruce had dealt him such a terrific blow on the side of his face.

While Bruce himself seemed always disinclined to discuss the matter, those who were most intimate with him inferred that he certainly

expected to meet Rifler again some day, for it was observed that he was always armed.

But the name of Dick Rifler was being gradually forgotten as the months slipped by and the people of the town of Albuk, freed from the fear of these "bad men," settled back again into their regular routine.

The most extensive business in that town was that which had now been established for many years by the late William Main, and consisted of a large lumber yard and a general supply store.

People to the number of some twelve to fifteen hundred, who composed the population of Albuk, for the most part lived in small white painted wooden houses, which had been built near to each other for mutual convenience and protection. Albuk, which was situated on the right bank of the Rio Grande, which river at that point almost encircled it, when seen from the summit of the neighboring hills, looked like a pearl in a setting of gold and platinum. So it appeared at least to those of the town's people who had seen it from that point of vantage, and in whose eyes pride and affection had united to cast a spell of enchantment over its buildings.

Not so, however, did it appear one dry, hot,

blistering day to three horsemen who looked down upon it with dark eyes.

One of them, minutely examining it through a field glass, said: "The general supply store must be pretty well stocked. I see a number of loaded wagons moving up to it. They are getting in their fall stock, all right." Then, turning his glass upon the lumber yard, he added, "There's a gang of men piling lumber in the yard—all working like niggers, too."

"What are they doing?" asked the man who was seated on the horse at his side.

"Building a bonfire, I suppose," he replied, with a wicked leer in his eye. "They have no town lights installed yet and Bruce is reported to have said that, 'The streets are so dark at night that they're scarcely safe for the women folks.' "

"They'll have light enough to-night," growled the third man, who had an ugly scar on the side of his face. Then turning the heads of their horses, they vanished behind the hills.

II

THE HOLOCAUST

The sun, which had been pouring down torrid waves of heat throughout the day, like fiery breaths from an oven, at length had disappeared behind the lofty mountains to the westward, and as the evening advanced, a grateful breeze came floating down through the Eastern Hills, which increased in strength and violence as the hour of midnight drew near, driving the sand in clouds across the plains.

About two o'clock in the morning, when not a star was visible in the sky, Doctor Duval, who the day before had been summoned to a case some thirty miles to the eastward, was walking his tired horse across the bridge which spanned the Rio Grande near the town, suddenly heard in the distance the sharp ring of horses' hoofs and he was almost immediately run down by three horsemen who swept past him at full gallop, making for the hills.

Reining in his frightened horse and recovering from his surprise, he raised his eyes toward the town and, to his horror, he saw fire breaking

out in several quarters of the lumber yard and almost immediately he beheld the general supply store enveloped in flames. Driving the spurs into his horse's flanks, he raced wildly through the streets, shouting at the top of his voice, "Fire! —Fire!!—Fire!!!"

The men and women were already out in the street, running madly up and down. The sight of the fire, breaking out so suddenly, in so many different quarters, seemed to have completely deprived them of their senses, and the Doctor, taking in the whole situation, rode backward and forward, commanding the women and children to make for the river, which was the only place of safety. The destruction of the town was complete; not a building escaped. That night the flame had scornfully puffed out its lips at the houses and stores and the lumber yard of Albuk and in the morning nothing remained to tell the tale but crumbling ruins.

The sun which the night before had smiled upon a prosperous town of comfortable homes rose in the morning over a wilderness of ashes.

David Bruce felt that he knew whose hand had kindled the devastating holocaust, and as he gazed upon the ruins of his business and the destruction of his hopes he muttered, "And to

think that I might have taken his blood—and I would have done so but—for——" and then he stopped himself and for a moment seemed like a man, as it were, in a dream.

III

CHICAGO

The books of the General Supply Store and Lumber Yard, which, at the close of each day's operations, were always securely locked away, in a strong iron safe, alone were left to bear mute testimony to the success which, for years, had attended the commercial undertakings of the late William Main and his nephew David Bruce.

These books Bruce removed as soon as possible to a place of safety, having, with the help of some Indians who at daybreak had camped upon the opposite side of the river, erected a small rough shack.

In this building he temporarily established his office and heroically set to work at the depressing task of ascertaining the state of his finances. After collecting the various accounts which were due him for lumber and other supplies, all of

which money he deposited in the bank at Santa Fe, he discovered that his total assets amounted to something less than sixteen thousand dollars ($16,000), against which there were liabilities of almost fifteen thousand dollars ($15,000). Having promptly paid his debts, he found himself with less than one thousand dollars ($1,000) to the good, but with his integrity unimpeached and his hope still high he courageously applied himself to the difficult task of rehabilitating his business.

The rough shack, in which he was compelled, for the present, to work and sleep, afforded him but scant protection from the weather and what with exposure, anxiety and badly prepared food, not many weeks had elapsed until one morning he found himself too sick to rise.

Doctor Duval, who throughout these terrible weeks succeeding the fire had proved himself not only a physician but a good Samaritan, was summoned and, under his care, in the course of a few days Bruce had sufficiently recovered to be able to attend to some of his duties.

The pain in his breast, however, still gripped him severely at times, and the Doctor told him to come up to his office for a thorough examination.

"Now, where is that pain, Bruce?" asked the Doctor, passing his skilful fingers over the right breast, just below the axillary region, but before Bruce had time to reply, he continued, "About here, isn't it?"

"Yes," said Bruce, as a sudden twinge of pain shot through his side.

To the Doctor's mind, the case was clear.

"It was here that Dick Rifler kicked you, wasn't it?" asked the Doctor.

"Somewhere there," answered Bruce.

"You're thinking of going to Chicago, I hear," said the Doctor.

"Probably I shall," replied Bruce. "The traveler for Richard Bell & Co. was here last week and he told me that he was satisfied if I could personally interview Mr. Bell and explain all the circumstances, suitable arrangements might be made to resume the business of the General Supply Store."

"Richard Bell is one of the greatest merchants in the Middle West and one of the shrewdest men in the commercial world," exclaimed the Doctor.

"He is as keen as a razor and has absolute confidence in his own estimate of men. I don't think he would turn a man like you down, more especially when he has done satisfactory business for

so many years with yourself and late uncle. I would certainly advise you to go up to Chicago and see him and, by the way, if that side of yours should trouble you while there, you had better consult my former professor, Doctor Walker; he's one of the greatest surgeons in America. I'll give you my card of introduction."

David Bruce, having decided to go to Chicago, left Albuk a week later for Santa Fe, where he took the train for Chicago.

Meanwhile, Doctor Duval had mailed the following letter to Doctor Walker:

"ALBUK, N. M., September 19th, 18—.

"Professor Walker, M.D., Ross Hospital, Chicago, Ill.

"MY DEAR PROFESSOR WALKER:

"A young man in our town, David Bruce by name, has been under my treatment for some time, and in my opinion is suffering from a tumor of more or less malignant type, which has developed in his right breast, under the axillary region. He is going to Chicago on business, and I have advised him to consult you, should he require medical attention while there. My card will serve as his introduction and identification.

"Yours truly,

"P. J. DUVAL."

A few days after this letter had been despatched, Bruce himself arrived in Chicago. Mile after mile, the gigantic engines of the Santa Fe,

like horses of war, tireless in their strength, had pounded the force of their might upon the endless rails.

Swifter and swifter, the heavy express from the south had careered across the prairies, and as at length it drew near to that immense city of the plains, piercing like an arrow the outlying suburbs and driving straight to its heart, a strange and unaccustomed feeling of excitement, shot through with loneliness, settled down upon his heart.

Issuing from the station on Polk Street and standing for a moment looking north on Dearborn Street, it seemed to him as though the sevenfold demon of that restless giant had already taken possession of his soul. Its pride and alertness and force and squalor and wealth and brutality and glory all strangely woven together like some magic tapestry seemed to clothe him with its ponderous fold.

Here men had scaled the dizzy heights of ambition and here, too, others had sunk to the lowest depths of despair. Ambition and despair—twin torturers of the human soul—which of these did this mighty city hold in her hand for him?

He had come to see Richard Bell and it seemed

to him as though his entire future was dependent upon that one man.

"To-morrow I will see him," he said to himself, as he drove to his hotel, but like many others who had voluntarily cast themselves into this vast maelstrom, he little knew what awaited him upon the morrow.

That night the spell of the city was upon him and for hours he traversed its streets and marveled at its greatness. The dazzling lights, the gilded music halls, from which the sound of music pealed forth to be drowned in the discordant din of the streets. The splendor of the equipages with their complement of laughing faces and rich gowns and brilliant jewels, as up and up the asphalted boulevard one carriage after another raced onward to the opera.

He hastened to the open door of a vast auditorium, and as the crowds were passing in he heard the strains of a wondrous orchestra and his fingers twitched involuntarily, in rhythm, as though he too was striking music from a harp. When the doors had closed he wandered on and on through the streets, saying to himself, "This is life! This is life! I never saw anything like this."

At last, when the hour was late, he returned

to his rooms in the hotel and all night long as he tossed restlessly in his sleep, he heard the city throb, unresting in its energy, tremendous in its force. Towards morning he fell into a troubled sleep and dreamed that the forces of the city about him had become a mighty juggernaut—rushing on and on—crushing all before it and beneath it, unpitying—relentless—cruel.

Suddenly awakened, he heard the shrill voices of the newsboys calling, "Murder." "Extra papers." "Extra papers." "All about the murder on Madison Street." And as this blood-curdling cry was repeated again and again he murmured to himself, "Life, this is not life—this is death!"

Lying down again, he fell into a fevered sleep, from which he was awakened by a sharp pain in his breast. The old pain had returned with greater violence than ever before. For the first time, the thought occurred to him that this was something serious.

Ringing for the bell-boy, he asked for the house physician, who, after a hasty examination, said, "Your case is one that calls for a surgeon immediately."

"But, Doctor!" exclaimed Bruce, "I had an appointment with Richard Bell this morning—a most important appointment."

"Doctor Walker can do a man in your condition more good," laconically answered the Doctor, as he hurried him off in the ambulance to Ross Hospital.

CHAPTER X

MUSIC, THE UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE

I

GABRIEL NORMANDIN

"YOU'VE got de hard times, mon frien'," said Gabriel Normandin, who was sitting propped up upon the next bed to that on which Bruce was lying, as he cast a sympathetic glance upon the pale, wan face, which still bore all the marks of intense suffering.

"Not so bad as last week, when I came in here. The operation was successful, but I guess this sickness has busted my business, all right. The Doctor told me yesterday that I'd have to go easy for a year or so and I don't know what I'll do now. Everything seems to have gone against me," he added wearily.

"Ah yes," answered Gabriel, "plen-tee bad luck, plen-tee bad luck; an' me, I have bad luck, too," he added, with a sigh.

Bruce turned his head and looked at him.

Gabriel Normandin was a French Canadian. Born in the Ottawa Valley, his parents had moved to La Prairie when he was a child. His pious mother had devoted him to the Priesthood, and for some years he had attended the Grand Seminaire, conducted by the Sulpicians, but he had made only indifferent progress with his literary and philosophical studies. His mind had been set on other things.

Brother Ignatius, his preceptor, had time and again said to him: "Gabriel, you will never make a Priest—you're not applying your mind to Philosophy—wake up—you look like a boy in a dream."

But these gentle reproofs of good Brother Ignatius were all lost upon Gabriel, and one day, when the summer term had concluded, he left the Seminaire, never to return.

He went home and lived for some years with his parents on their farm beside the Riviere La Prairie.

At the Seminaire, however, he had manifested not a little aptitude with the violin, and during the long, cold winter nights he used to sit for hours beside the square box stove in the kitchen of his father's home drawing forth from its strings the heroic and stirring melodies of old

Normandy. These melodies delighted his father's heart, but one night, as he concluded with the plaintive tones of the Ave Maria, his old mother said, "Gabriel, mon garçon, you mus' be de Pries', for sure,—you mus' go back to de Seminaire an' become de man of God," at which words she made the sign of the Cross upon her breast.

"Je pense que non," replied Gabriel. "It's better for me to learn a trade," and so it transpired that the next spring, after the flax had been put in the ground, Gabriel left La Prairie for Terrebonne, where he became an apprentice to his mother's brother, Alexis Des Monts, who manufactured plows, harrows, etc., for the Habitant farmers, in that vicinity.

Years passed by, and Gabriel, who had developed no little mechanical skill, invented many labor-saving devices, which were used in his uncle's shop. Returning home one day in the fall, on a brief visit to his parents, who were now aged, he found them out in the field, laboriously pulling flax.

"Yes, it's slow hard work," exclaimed his old father, "Beaucoup de travailler, beaucoup de travailler. If we could have one machine to pull it, we could be rich, for we could have fifty

arpents in place of two, but der's no machine and your modder and I mos' break our back at dis job."

That winter Gabriel succeeded in inventing a flax-puller, which could be attached to any reaping machine, and with golden dreams of future wealth he had traveled to Chicago for the purpose of selling his invention.

He had interviewed Mr. Silas Skinner, the patent expert, but delay followed delay, week after week, he was kept waiting for a decision. Meanwhile, his money having become nearly exhausted, he had paid for his board by playing the violin in the orchestra of the Hotel on Wabash Avenue where he had been staying.

Coming down with an attack of pneumonia, he had been sent to Ross Hospital, and it was there that he had become acquainted with David Bruce, who was now lying on the bed next to his.

"What do you do?" said Bruce, the following day to Gabriel.

"Me, I play de violin in de orchestra in de Beacon Chop House. Dat's good place to eat an' I mus' pay ma board while I stop here."

"Have they a harp in that orchestra?" inquired Bruce.

"O, non," replied Gabriel. "Jus' de violin and piccalo an' piano—but me, I was told de boss dat he mus' get one harp."

"What did he tell you?" said Bruce.

"De boss, he's say dat he can't fin' de man for play dat music, *c'est bien difficile*—comprend tu?"

"I used to play the harp," said Bruce. "Perhaps you could get me the job for a while, till I get stronger."

"Bien, oui," answered Gabriel. "I'll bring you dere maself avec your harp, when you get strong."

Six weeks later Bruce and Gabriel sat together in the orchestra of the Beacon Chop House, and the throngs of people who were assembled there observed that there was a new player in the band.

On a Sunday night some time later, as some of the guests were hilariously indulging in their wine, a mysterious hush suddenly settled down upon the company, and like the voice of a white-robed angel from Heaven the strains of Handel's Largo filled the room.

"Listen to that harp," exclaimed a thick-set man, with a pronounced German accent. "He is marvelous!"—"What's his name?"—"He ought to be in the Symphony."

The speaker, Thomas Gerhard, was a famous musical conductor.

That evening as he passed out of the restaurant, stepping up to the platform, he handed his card to Bruce, saying, "Come and see me at my studio, Arts and Crafts Building."

The following week when the patrons of the Symphony opened their program, they read these words printed upon a separate sheet of paper which had been inserted within their pages:

"THE DIRECTORS OF THE SYMPHONY HAVE PLEASURE IN ANNOUNCING THAT THE CELEBRATED SCOTCH ARTIST, DAVID BRUCE, PUPIL OF SIGNOR JUAN ALMANZOR, HARPIST TO THE KING OF SPAIN, HAS BEEN ENGAGED AS FIRST HARPIST OF THE SYMPHONY, AND WILL APPEAR IN SOLO, FOR THE FIRST TIME, AT THURSDAY AFTERNOON'S CONCERT."

II

"THE MESSIAH"

Almost a year after the time at which David Bruce had joined the Symphony, during which period his name and fame as a harpist had been

extolled, not only in the drawing rooms of the rich and cultured but also among the more critical circles of professional musicians, the announcement was made that the Mendelssohn Choir of two hundred and fifty voices, which, under the masterful conductorship of Klein Loewe, had won a world-wide reputation, was coming West to produce in conjunction with the Symphony Handel's "Messiah," the grandest oratorio in existence.

Thousands of people crowded a vast auditorium upon the night of this musical festival.

The singers were massed upon tiers of rising seats, in a semicircle around the back of the stage, while below them were ranged the various members of the symphony with their instruments. Harps, violins, double-basses, 'cellos, oboes, French-horns, cornets, trombones, flutes, clarinettes, cymbals, drums, and when Klein Loewe mounted the rostrum, a thrill of suppressed excitement was felt throughout the vast audience, for he was a conductor of almost magical power, as he was a musician of world-wide renown.

In appearance, he looked not unlike a monk, and his large head was set firmly on his shoulders. He only lacked the "Habit" to complete the resemblance.

With voice and instrument, the whole wondrous story of Redemption was vividly portrayed, from the first prophecies of the Messiah all the way down through his life and death and resurrection, until when the choir, as with one voice—and that the voice of a God—poured forth the words, "Hallelujah! Hallelujah! For the Lord God Omnipotent Reigneth," the vast assembly rose to its feet, and the choir concluded with an "Amen," "which seemed to spread its vibrations backward throughout all ages and forward into all time, beating its sounds against the skies, to be echoed back again to earth, and finally gathering itself up as with the force and majesty of a mighty tidal wave," [1] rolled forward conquering and to conquer throughout an endless eternity.

Bruce sat beside his harp as one in a trance. His soul burned with excitement and his fingers nervously struck the harp strings. His whole being was thrilled with the grandeur of the music, but his soul, like the souls of many others who heard the Oratorio that night, was untouched by its religious message.

Sometimes it seemed to him as though the sails of a ship, "rolling in a tempestuous sea, were

[1] Expression used by John Cumming, "Ex. Hall Lecture." James Nisbet & Co., London.

raising wild sopranos to the skies";[1] again, he seemed to be far away in the depths of a vast pine forest, whose branches like unto mighty harp chords, smitten by the storm, sent forth clear notes which echoed like bells of joy. He seemed to see waves of the sea transformed into "white-robed choristers"[1] which answered back the thundered bass of the clouds, when the words pealed forth with trumpet tones, "For unto us a child is born and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace"; and then once again the "drums sounded like avalanches, hurled down from mountain heights,"[1] as the deep bass with scorn cried out the challenge, "Why do the nations so furiously rage together?"

Music was his passion. It bound him as in chains of steel—it gripped his soul—it mastered him—it was his God, and as he sat in the midst of this great choir and orchestra, it seemed to him as though all nature was vocal, restless, impatient, eager, tremulous, insistent, demanding to be heard, to intoxicate, to control the world with its minstrelsy of praise.

[1] Expressions used in "Ex. Hall Lecture," by John Cumming. James Nisbet & Co., London.

The call of the blood of generations of ancestors who had dwelt far North, among the lofty crags and mountains of Scotland, summoned him and his enwrapt spirit panted for the free air of those hills, whose mists and tempests allured his very soul.

A strange mysterious feeling came over him, somehow, that night as he struck the last notes on his harp; he felt that never again would he play in the Symphony,—that he must be off, somewhere, far away on a journey—a long, long journey;—a journey that led through deep valleys to the hills beyond, where was the land of his sires.

CHAPTER XI

THE TRAGEDY AND TRIUMPH OF A SOUL

I

"THE UNPARDONABLE SIN"

THE operation which Doctor Maclaren had rushed home to perform on David Bruce had taken place none too soon. Shortly after the close of the Symphony season, Bruce had experienced a violent return of his former malady. Utterly discouraged and broken down in health, he had made his way home to Mapleton and there, in his own father's house, after the operation, the Doctor had told him that there was no possible hope of recovery.

For days after this announcement had been made to him, his heart had been filled with feelings of rebellion against God. He had cursed his luck and time and again he had been overheard by his mother saying to himself, "What's

the use of life, anyway! If I had only shot that man, if I had taken his blood, which he richly deserved, my business would have prospered and my life would have been spared. Thus God has rewarded me for obeying the parting words of my father, 'Never take the blood,' " and grinding out between his teeth in scorn the words, " 'Never take the blood, never take the blood.'—God—" he exclaimed, "don't speak to me of God; there is no God! If there was a God, I'd hate him!"

These awful words his mother had overheard, and they pierced her heart as with a sword.

She had heard her son—the child of her pangs and prayers—actually curse his Maker.

The daily thought, that the time would soon come when she should see him no more on earth, had filled her heart with sorrow, but now, alas, to think that he was going to meet his Maker with blasphemy upon his lips, and that his soul must be lost eternally in hell. This thought was indeed unbearable. Her heart was now completely broken, and all night long, as she lay in her bed, hot tears of agony drenched her pillow, while she moaned the words, "My son—my son—would God, I had died for thee!"

Early the following morning, old David Bruce

appeared at the door of the minister's study. His face, which was as pale as a ghost, looked like the face of a man who had heard the groans of the damned.

"Come in, Mr. Bruce," said Muir, giving the old man a warm shake of the hand.

"No, A'll not come in, Maister Muir," replied the old man. "A' jist cam doon ta tell ye aboot David. He's in an awfu' state."

"Yes," answered Muir, "Doctor Maclaren has informed me that he is suffering great bodily pain."

"Waur than that, Meenister," groaned the old man, and then with faltering accents, he added, "it's speeritual—it's speeritual. His mither heard him curse his Maker yester' e'en, an' the thocht that his soul is lost, has nearly killed her; all las' nicht she wept and moaned, 'My son—my son—would God, I had died for thee.'"

"Have you spoken to him yourself, Mr. Bruce?" asked Muir.

"No, A' hadna tha courage ta speak wi' him aboot thae maitters. Ye'll hae ta come, yer'sel, Maister Muir, an' tak him in han', an' if ye can do onything wi' him ta bring aboot a change o' hert, but it's a maist awfu' case an' A'm thinkin' hees commeetted tha 'Unpardonable Sin,' what

the Scripture ca's tha 'Sin against tha Holy Ghost,' which hath niver forgiveness, neither in this warl' nor in that which is to come. Before he gaed awa' ta New Mexico, A' had ma ain thochts, when he stayed oot sa' late at nicht, but he aye telt me that he was at tha 'Stag Club,' an' then hees uncle wrote that he cud fin' no faut wi' David save that like most o' tha young men at Albuk, he had his nichts o' deessipation. A' niver spoke thae words ta hees mither,—it wud hae killed her."

"I see," said Muir; " 'the flesh warreth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh,' but tell his mother there is still hope, for 'while the lamp holds on to burn, the greatest sinner may return,' and 'there is forgiveness with Him, that He may be found, and He will abundantly pardon.' "

"Oo, aye. A' ken thae words weel eneuch ma'sel," but he added with solemn tones in his voice, "there is a sin unto death, an' tha sin unto death hath niver forgiveness."

"There is no unpardonable sin, except the sin of refusing that pardon which avails for all sin," replied Muir earnestly; then after a pause, during which the searching eyes of old David had been fixed upon him with the eager look of a

man who, having been shipwrecked, had at last caught sight of a sail in the distance, bearing towards him, Muir added, "I'll come this evening. Tell his mother to trust in God."

"Then ye'll no be tellin' him that A' cam for ye," said the old man, as he turned to go.

II

"NOT BY MIGHT NOR BY POWER"

That same evening, and on many succeeding evenings, Muir called at the home of David Bruce. He had succeeded in becoming intimately acquainted with him and winning his regard, yet, for days, he had been unable to introduce those spiritual matters which were uppermost in his thoughts.

Whenever a turn in the conversation, which he had skilfully engineered, seemed to afford an opening for a word of spiritual advice, quick as a flash Bruce had changed the subject; so that all of Muir's attempts to introduce the subject of religion in an apparently casual way had been defeated, and this defeat had caused him deep heart searching.

During his college days he had stood at the head of his Theological classes.

On the night of "Convocation," he had been summoned up to the platform, and there had been presented with a traveling fellowship by the Venerable Chairman of the College Board. Then the Registrar, the Reverend Professor Barclay, had placed in his hand the Gold Medal, being the highest academic distinction which was within the power of the Theological Faculty to confer, and in making this presentation the learned professor had publicly announced to the "Convocation" that "the successful winner of the Gold Medal, Mr. James Muir, had proved himself a Theologian far in advance of his years in linguistic ability and critical judgment; that his remarkable thesis, which had been written in German, under the title of "Das Problem des Buches Hiob," was one of the most erudite and striking contributions of the year to the theological literature dealing with the Exilic period.

This scene and these words recurred to Muir, as he returned to his study at Mrs. MacGregor's.

"Yes," he said to himself, "they told me that I had succeeded marvelously in my discussion of the Problem of the Book of Job, but thus far I have miserably failed to solve the problem of

David Bruce."

Muir's heart was agitated and his mind sorely distressed when Mrs. MacGregor entered his study an hour later.

"Yer no yersel', tha nicht, Maister Muir," she said to him in a kindly sympathetic voice. "Yer takin' tha Kirk ow'er serious A'm thinkin', but ye sudna' fash yersel'. The folk are a' wi' ye an' it'll a' come richt. Oo, aye, ye needna fear for the Kirk, an' hae ye seen David Bruce tha nicht? He was a guid-hearted laddie, when A' used to hae him i' ma class i' tha Sabbath-Skule, an' he aye kent his catechisms, but when he left the Skule he gaed wi' bad company an' became a perfec' wastrel. But na smooth words 'ull dae him ony guid, ye'll hae ta convict him o' sin an' pint him ta tha Cross. Oo, aye, that's the only way, Maister Muir. A' jist lo'ed the laddie ever syne he gaed ta ma class an' there's no a nicht but A' pit up a prayer to God for tha salvation o' his soul. Oo aye, Oo aye. Ye'll hae ta convict him o' sin."

"That is the work of God's Holy Spirit," said Muir.

"Oo aye, but ye'll need ta help the Speerit, Maister Muir, an' may God gie ye tha word in season."

III

SAINT AUGUSTINE

"That's a fine harp you have," said Muir to Bruce, as he cast his eyes over to the corner of the room, in which old David Bruce had placed his son's harp, and then added, "How much I love the music of the harp, but there's no one in Mapleton who can play it. It's such a difficult instrument to master. I suppose you have not touched its chords since you came home."

"No," answered Bruce, "this pain has extended down the nerve of my right arm, and I have been unable to touch the harp for weeks, but now my arm feels better to-night. If you could bring it over beside me, perhaps I could sweep its strings once more."

"I wish so much you would," said Muir, as he rolled the large gilded harp across the polished floor.

Softly at first, then louder and louder, floated the rich mellow tones of the harp out through the open window of the room.

"Just listen to that harp," said Vernera Pemberton to Edith Carpenter, as at that moment

they passed the Bruce residence. "That must be Bruce himself. I heard, in New York, that the people out West had gone wild over his playing."

"I am not surprised at that," exclaimed Edith Carpenter, "if he can play so marvelously when he is sick, what must it have been to hear him when he was well. Listen; what is he playing, anyway?"

"Oh, that's from the 'Holy City,'" replied Vernera; "we sang that anthem last Easter in the Church of the Minor Prophets, and it made a tremendous hit," and so saying, she trilled over the words of Gaul's anthem.

"List cherubic host in thousand choirs
Touch their immortal harps of golden wires
With those just spirits that wear victorious palms
Singing everlastingly devout and holy psalms."

"That's great," said Muir, as he rolled the harp back again to the corner. "Where did you ever learn to play like that?"

"Oh, I learned it in Albuk, from an old broken-down Spanish musician. He was a corker, all right. For years he had been professor in the Conservatory of Milan, later he was appointed harpist to the Royal Court of Spain, but there

was a mystery in his life. I think he had a past. At any rate, I ran up against him at Albuk, and the old fellow gave me lessons for several years."

"Did he ever speak of his experiences at Milan?" asked Muir.

"Not much," answered Bruce, "but he said that the Conservatory of Music in that city was established within the walls of an ancient monastery, and that Milan was the center of music in Italy."

"A very ancient monastery indeed and a very old city," responded Muir. "Milan has long been noted for the excellence of its music. I recollect, last spring, hearing marvelous music in its great Cathedral. What a checkered history is the story of Milan! But throughout all the many vicissitudes of the long centuries and the rise and fall of temporal powers, the church has maintained its supremacy, and has continued to diffuse throughout that city a beautiful religious atmosphere.

"It was there, in the fourth century, that the famous Bishop Ambrose lived and preached, and it was under the spell of his mighty preaching that Saint Augustine was converted. A man who had once been a frightful libertine, and who had

sunk deep down in the mire of licentiousness, indeed he had broken the heart of his saintly mother, Monica, but by the grace of God, one day coming under the influence of Saint Ambrose, he was convicted of his sin and, turning from the error of his former ways, received the cleansing and the forgiveness of God."

"I never heard about him," said Bruce.

"Then, let me tell you the story of his life; it is one of the most thrilling in all the long annals of the church. Born in the middle of the fourth century, as he was, the story of his life reads like the life story of some men living to-day." As Muir uttered these words, Bruce gave him a piercing glance. "As a boy, Augustine was full of mischievous pranks and he used to rob orchards out of sheer deviltry, all of which actions filled his mother's heart with anxiety and alarm. She was a most Christian woman. Then, when he was sixteen years of age, he left school and spent a year in idleness at home. Leaving home and going to the University of Carthage, he plunged into a veritable mud-bath of licentiousness, tarnishing his imagination and his intellect. The day he left home his mother had placed her Bible in the sack among his clothes, but he never opened its covers or read from its pages its holy

words of warning and admonition. He plunged deeper and deeper into vice, and associating himself with men of skeptical notions, he used their arguments to silence the voice of his conscience, which from time to time accused him of his sin. Throughout all these years, his mother had continued to pray for him. At last, there occurred a series of providential incidents, which were sent of Heaven to bring him back, step by step, to his mother's God. He had become proficient in Rhetoric, and shortly after the death of his dearest friend, whose words of warning he had treated lightly, he left Carthage for Rome to pursue his profession in that city, but becoming dissatisfied after a time, he had taken his way to Milan, and there under the sermons of the great Ambrose, which sermons rolled over him with persuasive power, he was convicted of his sin, he acknowledged the error of his past life, and, turning to God, with deep penitence, he confessed his sin, and was born again into the new life of purity and of faith. This man who had descended to the lowest depths of vice was converted by the Power of God and continued for forty-three years to labor in the service of the Church, and to-day, after all these centuries, the name of Saint Augustine is held in the highest reverence

by all Christians the world over, whether Catholics or Protestants."

For some minutes after Muir had concluded the recital of this story, Bruce sat in silence, his eyes fixed upon the floor. It was apparent that he had been deeply touched by the story of Saint Augustine. At length raising his eyes, and looking Muir straight in the face, he said, with a tremor in his voice, "Is that story true; is that the real story of Saint Augustine?" Then, after Muir had nodded assent, he continued, "That might almost have been the story of my own life, it is so like it, all save the last. I, too, left home after breaking my mother's heart. I, too, neglected to read the Bible her hands had placed in my trunk. I, too, defiled the temple of God. My uncle just the day before his sudden death had reproved me of this sin with which my life had been stained. I, too, made my way to a large city in which I pursued my profession. There, I, too, became dissatisfied and in distress of body and in utter hopelessness of mind I came home to die. My body must soon succumb to the power of this loathsome disease," and then with hot tears coursing down his pallid cheeks he sighed, "the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved."

The shadows of evening were gathering in the room in which Muir and Bruce were sitting, the twilight shades were deepening into the darkness of the night. There they sat together in silence, the man who had sinned, and the man of God, who had somehow broken through the adamantine walls and spoken a word in season.

Then, as old Mrs. Bruce quietly walked past the door, she heard Muir's voice repeating in gentle tones the words:

"If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

"In that last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any man thirst let him come unto me and drink and whosoever cometh unto me, him I will in no wise cast out."

Then followed the parable of the Prodigal Son, and as Muir began the words, "I will arise and go unto my Father," Janet Bruce, David's mother, heard two voices instead of one repeating the words, and, rushing out to the other room in which her husband was sitting, exclaimed: "Thank God! 'This my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'"

That night, after Muir had knelt down beside Bruce's chair and prayed words of confession with thanksgiving and faith, he rose, and, taking

the hand of David Bruce firmly in his own, he said: "Now unto Him Who is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. To the only wise God our Savior be glory and majesty, dominion and power both now and forever," and David Bruce, raising himself up in the strength of a new-found faith, answered, "Amen."

CHAPTER XII

AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THE KIRK

I

TWO OLD SCOTCH CRONIES

"YON'S no bad whusky," said Malcolm Beatson to his old-time cronie, Donald MacPherson, as, in accordance with their weekly custom, they sat together of a Sunday night, indulging in their usual confab and dram.

"There's no bad whusky, Malcolm," replied Donald, as with a sigh of satisfaction he laid his empty glass down upon the table; "no, there's no bad whusky, but there's some better." This quiet rejoinder brought a smile to Malcolm's face, and with a nod of his head he replied: "It's jist a taste o' Glenlivet, that young Dugald brocht ow'er ta me frae Glasgow, an' A' was o' tha opeenion ye'd no find muckle ta complain o' wi' it. But A'm thinkin' we'll a' hae ta be mendin' oor ways. Not that A' iver took much stock i'

thae total-absteenence bodies ma'sel, but it's jist comin' ow'er me that there's nae disputin' tha fac' that drink is an awfu' curse, an' there's sae mony noo-a-days that's abusin' it. It was the cause of David Bruce's doonfa', puir laddie!"

"Weel, weel," answered Donald, "tha young folk noo-a-days are no content wi' jist a moderate dram like us, but a' dinna see for why we a' sud stap takin' a wee dram, noo an' then, jist because thae young rascals wull get roarin' fu'."

"Tha meenister pit it strong in his sermon tha day when he was discoorsin aboot thae drunkards o' Ephraim," answered Malcolm. "As the meenister was speakin, A' thocht A' cud fairly hear their drucken words: [1] 'Ki tsav la stav—tsav la stav—qav la qav—qav la qav—Z'eir sham—Z'eir sham.' "

"Oo aye," said Donald, "the meenister nae doot mad plain eneuch tha aifter effects, but he didna say onything aboot tha awfu' drouth."

"An' he was sayin' that we oucht ta remember the power o' example an' no be pittin stumblin-block i' the way o' tha weak," said Malcolm.

"A'weel, maybe hee's richt," replied Donald.

[1] George Adam Smith's description of the Drunkards of Ephraim, "The Expositor's Bible." Funk and Wagnalls, New York.

"It's no for the likes o' me to be contradictin tha meenister—an' for a' we're takin A'm thinkin we micht aboot as weel pit a stap to it."

"There's signs o' a great awakening in tha Kirk," said Malcolm, "an' there's nae doot but that the fa' an' conveersion o' David Bruce is producin a wide effec'—but A' dinna see how tha meenister did onything wi' him. He was aye sae dour an' set in his ways—but there's nae doot he's a changed man tha noo an' A'm gled for auld David's sake."

"Tha meenister tha day minded me o' Robert Murray McCheyne when years ago in Dundee A' heard him preach," said Donald. "He was sae earnest-like. He seemed ta hae tha unction o' God."

That night the bottle of Glenlivet was locked away in the press. These weekly confabs continued, but there were no more drams.

II

A SOCIAL CLIMBER

There was a large gathering of the ladies of St. Giles at Mrs. MacGregor's on the occasion of the organization of the Mission Study

Class. While the majority of those present were sincerely interested in the good cause, there were a few who had attended from other motives. Indeed, Mrs. Junius P. C. Pemberton had remarked to Mrs. Alfred Banbury, on their way to the meeting, that Junius had simply no use for missions, that he thought the heathen were all right as they were, for if they never heard of Christianity they could not be condemned for not living according to its precepts, and that she herself had always considered that Junius had such good business judgment. Mrs. Banbury, the wife of an accountant in the office of the Pemberton factory, had only recently moved with her husband to Mapleton. She was a woman socially very ambitious, and had formerly been identified with the Congregational Church; but soon after her arrival at Mapleton, having discovered that the best old families of the city attended St. Giles, she had been most regular in her attendance at all the ladies' meetings, and, learning that the Gardiners, the Maclarens, the Allans, the St. Claires, the Robertsons and others were all interested in the organization of the new Mission Study Class, she saw fit to reply to Mrs. Pemberton that "We really must all rally around Mr. Muir; he seems to be such an earnest man!"

Muir opened the meeting with a fervent prayer and then briefly addressed the ladies upon the subject of the "Modern Missionary Motive," emphasizing that the question was not what God would do with the heathen who had had no chance to know the Gospel, but rather what God would do with us if we failed to give the Gospel to these people. He pointed out that at the present time there was need of a vast increase in money for the support of foreign mission work. He said that the cause of this was due to the fact that foreign mission enterprise had now emerged from the "Individual Stage" to the "Family Stage" and that nowadays in order to retain the ground which the church had won among the heathen, she was under the necessity of providing means by which to care for entire families and that should the church fail to rise to this obligation the condition of many of these people who had been converted from idols would soon become worse than that of the heathen.

The meeting was then thrown open for discussion, and several of the ladies expressed opinions favorable to the proposed organization.

Jean St. Claire gave an account of the great meetings held in Edinburgh in connection with the Jubilee of Medical Missions. She related that

Dr. Farrar, robed in a rich black gown, had preached on that occasion a magnificent missionary sermon from the text, "I have compassion on the multitude," and she stated that with him on the platform was a host of distinguished personages, including the Duke of Argyle and Professor Blackie and Doctor James MacGregor, Henry Drummond, Mrs. Bird, the famous traveler in Asia, and other notables.

Mrs. MacGregor remarked that having for long years been intimately acquainted with Miss St. Claire's mother and her grandmother, whose presence graced their meeting to-day, she was not surprised that she had found time and inclination to attend the great Missionary Jubilee while abroad in Scotland, and she concluded by moving that a Mission Study Class be organized.

Mrs. Banbury, whose keen eagle eyes had taken in the whole situation, immediately rose and said that she "had very great pleasure in supporting Mrs. MacGregor's motion, and would with Mrs. MacGregor's gracious consent like to add that the motto, 'Noblesse Oblige,' be adopted by the new organization."

After the motion had been carried unanimously Mrs. Burns-Evans, a rather giddy society woman and a friend of Mrs. Pemberton's, bending over,

whispered in her ear: "Who is Mrs. Banbury?" To which Mrs. Pemberton replied, sotto voce, "A climber." At which both these ladies smiled knowingly.

However, the Mission Study Class was founded, and it proved a mighty success. Indeed, the members had become so impressed with the needs of the women in India, of whose condition they had learned, that before the year had ended the following item appeared in the church paper:

"The women of St. Giles Church Mission Study Class, having undertaken the entire support of a Missionary to represent them in India, the Foreign Mission Board has appointed Miss Jennie B. Rankine, M.D., as Missionary of St. Giles Church, Mapleton, to India. Doctor Rankine leaves on Friday for Allahabad. The Foreign Mission Board earnestly hopes that many other churches throughout Canada will emulate the good example of St. Giles."

III

WALTER SCOT'S STORY

On the corner of Main and Market Streets there stood an old-fashioned square stone building, which had doggedly held on to its site, notwithstanding all the transformation that time had brought about in the adjoining premises.

This low-set two-story stone building seemed to have the energy of persistence, and in this it might have been regarded as a fitting type of the man whose name, printed in heavy square letters, appeared on the sign above its wide corner door.

This building had, however, been compelled to yield a little to the onward march of progress, which in other quarters of the city had swept all before it. It had in years gone by been the fashionable residence of Major Gordon, but shortly after his death the members of his family had moved elsewhere. Mapleton had entered upon a period of city expansion, and so it happened that one day, under the auctioneer's hammer, this gray stone building had become the property of Walter Scot.

He had turned the ground floor into a grocery, himself living with his family above the shop, and when of more recent years he had removed his domicile to a fashionable residence in the upper part of the city, the whole building had been consigned to the large and growing trade which swept in and out of its doors. And this trade had swelled to very large proportions indeed, for everybody knew that Walter Scot's grocery was the best and most reliable in the city of Mapleton. Delivery wagons bearing the name of WAL-

TER SCOT were even to be seen on the streets of the neighboring towns two days in each week.

Walter Scot, as his name implied, was a Scotchman. Some sixty years before the present time he had been born in Scotland and there were those among the town's people who had said of him that, while he walked the streets of Mapleton, he lived in Scotland. Be this as it may, as day after day he sat behind the desk in the front of his store, he was never too busy to exchange a good Scotch story with any of his acquaintances.

It was not unusual, in the evening hour, about the time of closing, to see a number of men sitting around inside Walter Scot's private office. Needless to say, these men, with few exceptions, were like himself among the trusted pillars of St. Giles.

It happened one night, when this coterie of men were almost splitting their sides with laughter, at one of Walter Scot's famous stories, that the tall figure of W. G. Hale was seen to enter the door.

"Come away in, William," said Walter, beckoning him to a chair, for, although some months previously W. G. Hale had given up his pew in St. Giles, the fact that he was Scotch to the backbone had bound him to Walter's big heart as with bands of iron.

"You seem to be somewhat uproarious to-night for staid Presbyterians," exclaimed Hale, as he glanced in a kindly manner around the circle and sat down in the proffered seat.

"Oh, we're just laughing at Walter Scot's latest story," said Gordon Chisholm, who, like Walter, himself was a staunch Elder of the Kirk; and then, turning to Walter, said: "You better repeat that story for Hale's benefit," and all the men signifying their approval, Walter drew himself up in his chair and began.

The story is told about the Reverend Norman Black of the Parish of Canlachie, proceeded Walter, with a serious tone in his voice. For upwards of forty years this godly man ministered in the word to the good people of that parish, and during these long years he had been called upon, on many occasions, to conduct the funeral services of different members of his flock who had been called beyond.

On such occasions, it was the custom in Canlachie to take the remains into the Kirk, and, this done, the Reverend Norman Black would read the Word, conduct the prayers, and then whenever his conscience permitted, pronounce a eulogy upon the character of the departed.

At last the day came when Norman Black him-

self, rich in service and ripe in years, lay a-dying.

The Elders of the Kirk gathered around his bed and poured forth into his ears their tender words of consolation.

"Ye've more of your people in Heaven than on earth, Mr. Black," they had told him.

"Ye mind when John Sangster died ye told us that he had gone to Heaven and ye said the same about Janet Gillespie, and Ian Pringle, and many others, and it will not be long before ye'll be meeting them all again in Heaven." To all of which good old Norman Black entirely agreed. Well, at last he died and he went to Heaven, and some time after he had arrived there, an angel found him all alone upon the hillside weeping as if his heart would break. On enquiry, the angel discovered the reason, for Norman Black, after making profuse apologies for his tears, had confided to him that during all the days in which he had been in Heaven he had not been able to discover any Presbyterians, and that his heart was overcome with loneliness, and then he added that seeing a great throng of people up around the Throne, singing Hallelujah, he had gone up to where they were located, for he was sure that the Presbyterians would be nearest to the Throne, but these people had elbowed him back, and to his

utter consternation, he had discovered that they were all Methodists, and this had surprised him all the more, because in Canlachie they had never thought that the Lord cared much for the Methodists at all. Then the angel said to him: "Mr. Black, you don't know how things are arranged in Heaven."

"May be I don't, may be I don't," answered Black.

"Now look," continued the angel, "do you see these two hills far away yonder in the distance with a valley between them? Well, you go away down through that valley three days' journey to its farthest point—and there you'll find all the Presbyterians—they're the farthest from the Throne in Heaven, for they're the only people the Lord can trust out of his sight."

As Walter pronounced the last words the men broke out again into a great burst of laughter, and when it had subsided W. G. Hale remarked that it was well for Moderator of Presbytery Henderson that he had not told Scot what he had admitted to him on the night of the Ordination, namely that he really believed the time was coming when there would be a Union of the Evangelical Churches.

"Speaking seriously, Walter, while I cannot

say that I am in accord with all the doctrines of any of the churches, yet it would, to my way of thinking, be in the interests of all the churches themselves from a business standpoint to get together."

"In what way?" enquired Walter.

"It would reduce expenses, concentrate their forces and increase their efficiency."

"I'm not so sure that any of these objects would be attained by an organic union of the churches," replied Walter.

"In the business world the monopolistic movements have effected but little saving to the consumer, while they had been the means of reducing hosts of small capitalists to a condition little better than that of pawns whose every movement was controlled by money lords, which gentlemen amused themselves playing the game and incidentally piling up enormous fortunes for themselves, and as for promoting greater efficiency surely all students of church history must recognize that the balance of testimony from experience indisputably points to contrary conclusion.

"Christianity would not be as strong as it is in England to-day had all the Christians remained in the Established Church since the time of King Henry VIII. Was not the progress of

the Church in Scotland given a mighty impetus by the disruption of '43 and speaking of the Methodists, is it not a fact that it was only by the exodus of Wesley and those whose souls, like his own, burned with Evangelical zeal which gave to the world the all-conquering Methodist Church?

"The same beneficent results of heroic contention for a principle find expression in the most vivid and impressive pages of the history of nations.

"Would any one seriously affirm that had the New England Colonies calmly submitted to the injustice of taxation without representation, which was imposed upon them by King George and his parliament, the inspiring records of American liberties would ever have been written?

"No, I am a Presbyterian, and I love my Church—but I respect all other churches and with John Wesley I would say,

> "In things essential unity,
> In things indifferent liberty,
> In all things charity."

"Hear, hear," exclaimed the men, when Walter had concluded his argument.

They well knew his utter sincerity. He was a most devout man, whose sterling integrity had

been everywhere admitted and approved, a typical Presbyterian of the old school, a school from which there had been graduated throughout many generations innumerable men and women whose splendid integrity had adorned the doctrines which they and their fathers had professed.

As W. G. Hale rose to leave, he said, "Well, well, Walter, have it your own way if you will. It seems to me, however, that you have no serious objections to dealing with the Methodists, Congregationalists, Baptists, and Anglicans six days in the week, but I suppose the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God, whose preeminent representatives on earth must ever be to you John Knox and St. Giles."

"James Muir and St. Giles," put in Neil Ferguson.

"Oh, yes," said Hale, "the old beadle solemnly informed me in speaking of the advent of the Reverend James Muir that, 'Elijah had come!' "

"You'll have to come up yourself and hear him," said Walter.

CHAPTER XIII

SACRAMENT SABBATH IN THE KIRK

THE morning of Sacrament Sabbath dawned bright and balmy over the town of Mapleton, and as the great bell of St. Giles peeled forth its mellow music it seemed as though with solemn cadences it summoned the people not only to church but to God.

From all quarters of the town men and women might have been observed wending their way to the Kirk.

"I never hear that bell," remarked Jean St. Claire to her brother, "but I am reminded of the romantic story of the bells of Bottreaux Tower."

"You mean the bells of Tintagel," answered her brother as he plucked a rose from the luxuriant vine which spread its branches over the iron fence that skirted the "Elms" and gave it to his sister.

"No," replied Jean, "you know that while as a matter of fact the towers of the Bottreaux Church are silent yet there is a legend frequently

repeated by the fishermen of that part of the Cornish coast to the effect that whenever the storm rises over these waters the sound of bells tolling is heard far down in the depths beneath."

"Where did they get that idea?"

"Oh," replied his sister, "it is told by the old fishermen that these bells intended for the Bottreaux Tower were cast in France and were being brought over to England on a ship. When they sighted the coast a sailor hearing the Tintagel bells echo over the water kneeled down upon the deck and devoutly thanked God for having brought them home safely.

"This act of the sailor enraged the Captain, who was said to be an atheist. Coming on the scene, he gave him a brutal kick and ordering him up off his knees, told him to thank the Captain and not God, for it was the Captain that had guided the vessel safely home.

"Scarcely had these scornful words escaped his lips when the vessel struck a rock and went down, crew and all, to the bottom of the sea. These bells which were to have hung in Bottreaux Tower were buried fathoms deep, and the legend tells us further that when the west wind blows gently across the waters the melody of an old hymn is plainly heard.

"COME TO THY GOD IN TIME;
"YOUTH, MANHOOD, OLD AGE PAST,
"COME TO THY GOD AT LAST."

Just as Jean concluded this story, she and her brother found themselves in the vestibule of St. Giles and passing quietly in, they took their accustomed seats in the old family pew.

The church was crowded, and not a sound could be heard as the venerable elders walked reverently up and down the aisles, collecting the tokens.

Then Muir, whose face seemed to have been transfigured, solemnly lined over the words of the Scripture paraphrase which was invariably sung in all the Scottish churches before the elements were dispensed, and, as his rich voice concluded this recital with the words:—

"With love to man this cup is fraught.
Let all partake the sacred draught.
Through latest ages let it pour
In memory of my dying hour,"

a deep and reverent emotion of penitence, gratitude and adoration swept over the waiting congregation.

At the close of the service, Muir, looking earnestly down upon the assembled worshipers, said: "The benediction will not be pronounced in

the Church this morning, inasmuch as this service will now adjourn to the home of Mr. David Bruce, where the Sacrament of Our Lord and Savior will be administered to his son David Bruce, this at his own request. Any members of this Church desiring to be present will be made welcome."

Half an hour later David Bruce, in the presence of his father and mother, the elders and some of the members of St. Giles, received his first and last Communion from the hands of the Reverend James Muir.

This simple service of the Presbyterian Church, by which this Sacrament had been administered, not in private, but in the presence of several members of the Congregation, Muir concluded with the words, so dear to David Bruce,

"And now unto Him, who is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior be Glory and Majesty, Dominion and Power, both now and forever—Amen."

II

THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW

That Sunday night, weary and nervous with the labors of the day, Muir tossed rest-

lessly upon his bed. Falling into a light sleep between one and two o'clock in the morning, he was suddenly awakened by the violent ringing of the telephone in his study.

Rushing across the hall and placing the receiver to his ear, a voice enquired, "Is that Mr. Muir?"

"Speaking," replied Muir.

"This is Doctor Maclaren's office. Your presence is desired immediately at David Bruce's."

"David must be worse," said Muir to himself, as hurriedly dressing himself, he hastened out into the street.

Arriving at the Bruce residence, he was met at the door by old David.

"Yer here, Mr. Muir," said the old man, gripping his hand like a vice. "Go in—the Doctor's in there. He says the end is near"—and so saying he ushered Muir into David's bedroom.

Seeing Muir enter, Doctor Maclaren advanced towards the door, his hands covered with blood.

"David and I have been plugging the cavity with gauze," said the Doctor; "we've just got it fixed up," and, turning to David, said, "You're not in pain now, are you David?"

"No," answered David, "only weak."

"Well—just keep quiet—Muir will apply his

hand gently to that gauze—like this (touching the gauze) to keep it in its place. His side is too tender, to-night, to admit of a bandage, Mr. Muir. Just hold it gently and keep it in its place."

"I'll be going now, David," said the Doctor after a few moments. "Muir will remain with you until Dick comes. He left Toronto on the eleven o'clock train and is due here at five."

"All right, Doctor," said Bruce. "Thank you —Good night."

For some time Muir continued to sit at Bruce's bedside, gently pressing his fingers against the antiseptic gauze—at length Bruce said to him, "There's a letter in the desk that I wish you to deliver—it's addressed. It's mighty good of you to stay with me; I can never repay you for all you have been, and done for me. Do what you can when I am gone to comfort Mother, tell her that I was ready and willing to answer the call—that we will meet again in the morning in the land where there is no more pain."

"He is able to keep you from falling and to present you all before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy," answered Muir.

Shortly after these words were spoken David Bruce became faint with exhaustion. At length

he closed his eyes. Muir thought that he had fallen peacefully asleep. But in a few moments he heard him whispering, the scenes of the past and of the future apparently controlling his thoughts, "Messiah to-night!"—"Messiah to-night!"—"Great Crowd!"—"Great Crowd!"—"I know that my Redeemer liveth"—"Harps"—"Harps"—"Full Band"—"God Omnipotent Reigneth"—"That inscription on"—"In domo Patris mei Habitationes"—but before David Bruce had finished the sentence his soul had entered into the Mansions of the Blessed.

III

THE HARP OF DAVID BRUCE

Two days later the funeral service of David Bruce was conducted in St. Giles. Every seat was occupied and there were many standing in the aisles. The service was marked by simplicity. After prayer Muir announced the fifty-third paraphrase beginning with the words:

"Take comfort, Christians, when your friends
In Jesus fall asleep.
Their better being never ends;
Why then dejected weep?

"Why inconsolable, as these
To whom no hope is given?
Death is the messenger of peace
And calls the soul to Heaven."

Then followed the reading of the 121st Psalm and part of 14th Chapter of Saint John, and as Muir concluded with the story of the Prodigal Son, from the 15th Chapter of Saint Luke, there was scarcely a dry eye in the church.

The clear tones of a harp were heard in the choir. It was the Harp of David Bruce—the Harp he loved so well. The happy thought of introducing the Harp had occurred to Vernera Pemberton and it was her hands that swept its chords as the music of women's voices filled the vast arches of the church, singing:

"List cherubic host in thousand choirs
Touch their immortal harps with golden wires,
With those just spirits that wear victorious palms
Singing everlastingly devout and holy psalms." [1]

Then Donald Kennedy's powerful bass voice rolled out the words:

"And I heard the voice of harpers, harping before the throne,
And they sang as it were a new song, before the throne,
And no man could learn that song but they that had been redeemed." [1]

[1] From "The Holy City," A. R. Gaul.

That day, Vernera had joined the choir of St. Giles, and it was a day which she never forgot, nor did many others.

IV

DICK RIFLER

Some days after the funeral of David Bruce, his aged father received among many other letters of condolence the following lines from Professor Juan Almanzor of Albuk, New Mexico:

Dear Sir:

My heart is overflowing with lonely sorrow to-day, for I have read in the paper of the death of your noble son David, whom I loved as if he was my very own boy. I shall never forget him. He was the best friend I ever had in America and was always so kind to me. Many of the happiest evenings of my life I passed with him in his rooms above the office of the General Supply Store. His sad death has resulted from the brutal kick he got from a notoriously bad man, Dick Rifler, who for years with his gang terrorized the town of Albuk and the entire country for miles around it. You will be interested to learn that, at last, the judgment of God, so long delayed, smote this villain. The woman who had been for years his special friend, he deserted, and in her jealous rage, she swore vengeance against him. One dark night as he was making his way on horseback through the mountains to one of his secret retreats, she dressed herself

in a man's clothes and mounted her horse. Meeting him in a narrow gorge, she threw vitriol on his face. Crazed with agony and blinded, he drove the spurs into his horse, which rushed madly forward through the darkness and hurled itself and rider from the top of a high precipice. Some days later his body was found, terribly mangled by the fall. His was an awful death, but one which his crimes deeply merited. My heart is full of sorrow because David is dead. I shall now be very lonely, for never any more will letters come from him to me. Please accept my deep sympathy and tell his mother that her son David was a brave hero.

Yours with respect,

JUAN ALMANZOR.

CHAPTER XIV

THE MYSTERY OF LOVE

I

JEAN ST. CLAIRE

JEAN ST. CLAIRE was not what you would call pretty, but she was handsome, of medium height, with large honest eyes and with an abundance of brown wavy hair in which there was a suggestion of auburn, but her chief attraction was her charming manner, gracious, gentle, with a winsomeness that few could withstand. She was a young lady of keen intelligence and of high intellectual attainment. Devoted to literature, she had also a fine appreciation of the exquisite in art. The former had been inherited from her father, the latter from her mother.

Jean was a general favorite among the older people, and from the days when she had attended High School she had also a host of youthful admirers.

That boy was envied, indeed, who had been granted the privilege of gliding around the skating rink with Jean's hand in his, while it was affirmed that Ronald Scot had bought a Peterborough canoe for no other reason than that he had experienced alluring visions of himself and Jean rippling the sleepy moonlit waters of the Iroquois.

Even the Master of English, in the High School, had found it on several occasions more than convenient to walk home after school by the "Elms," as Jean's home was called.

Mrs. MacGregor had once said to her, "Jean, Jean, you give a bit of your heart to every one; what will you do when the real Prince comes?"

At this Jean had smiled, and then becoming serious again, replied, "But, Mrs. MacGregor, I haven't yet discovered that I have a heart."

When in Scotland with the Maclarens, Dr. MacLeod had done his best to persuade Jean that she had a heart.

With him it had been love at first sight, and the more he had seen of her the more ardent his love had grown.

The fact that he belonged to the medical profession was a sure recommendation to Jean's interest. Her father, who for many years had been

the leading Doctor of Mapleton and the surrounding country, had always been her hero. Indeed, a Doctor had always been her ideal of manhood and everything related to the science of medicine had a peculiar fascination for her. Her two brothers had devoted themselves to the science of Æsculapius and there was little reason to doubt that had Jean also been a boy she too would have entered the same profession.

At the age when most children were making mud pies she was busily engaged compounding powders out of ground red brick mixed with washing soda and black pepper and, like her brothers, was never known to be without a small glass bottle in her pocket.

When she had become older she was not infrequently discovered by her father poring over the Medical Quarterly, to which he was a subscriber, and caught in this act one day by Mrs. MacGregor, Jean had replied to a gentle reproof, "Oh, I guess I am like the darky 'just born so.' "

Doctor MacLeod, who was young and handsome, had the appearance of a man who took his profession very seriously. Into Jean's sympathetic ear he had poured all his ambitious dreams; of how he hoped in later years to devote

part of his time to the work of original research. There was so much still unexplored in the wide field of medical science.

As he thus had manifested his splendid enthusiasm, Jean had become more than a little interested, and her eyes had burned with a sympathetic glow.

Little wonder then that young Doctor MacLeod should have inferred that some of this interest was in himself personally. He had inwardly vowed that she was his destiny, and that he must surely endeavor, before she sailed away home, to give her some intimation of his devotion.

While it had occurred to him that it would scarcely be good form to make a proposal upon so brief an acquaintance, yet he hoped that he might at least be able to secure from her some mark of her personal interest before she returned to Canada.

His hopes, however, had all been defeated, for two days before the Congress concluded its sessions he had been hurriedly summoned to the Provinces for an operation. On his way to the station he had called at the St. Enoch's Hotel, hoping to see Jean, only to learn that she had suddenly departed, and it was not until his return

that at the closing banquet of the Association he had learned from Mrs. Maclaren that Jean had gone up to London with Mrs. Webster and would not be back, as she intended to join them at Liverpool on the day of sailing.

Upon entering her stateroom, Jean's eye spied a large box, which was filled with magnificent roses, together with a spray of white heather, to which was attached the card of Angus MacLeod, M. D., with the words written across it, "Dinna forget auld Scotia."

As she pinned this sprig of white heather on her gown she said to herself, "Too bad I did not meet him again."

Up to this time in her life the thought of really falling in love had never entered her mind, but at that moment a wonderful emotion thrilled her soul, as she seemed to realize, for the first time, what love might be—that emotion, which is as old as the ages and yet ever as new as the morning. Not that she consciously loved any one, but she seemed to divine, in this spray of heather, the mysterious yearning of a human heart, and had Doctor MacLeod been present at that moment to plead his cause, under the spell of this ecstasy, her heart might have consented to his appeal. But he was not present, and the steamer

sailed away. It carried her far away, and conditions entirely new entered into her life before they were destined to met again.

II

ANGUS MACLEOD, M.D.

It was the early autumn, and the maple trees that graced the boulevards of Mapleton, touched with the first frosts, had assumed all the colors of the rainbow. The City with its beautiful residences and wide lawns was always attractive, and now it appeared at its best.

Indeed, it presented an appearance of more than ordinary attractiveness to an alert young man, with a pronounced Scottish accent, who stepped briskly up to the office in the Maple Leaf Hotel and signed the name of Angus MacLeod, M.D., Glasgow.

Sounding the bell, which echoed sharply throughout the corridors, the clerk said, "Show this gentleman up to No. 73."

The following morning as Mrs. Maclaren and her husband were seated at the table in the breakfast room, Bridget entered with the morning paper and a bundle of letters. Giving the letters

to the Doctor, she handed the paper to his wife. Glancing down the local news column, she exclaimed with a titter, "Well, I never—I told you so."

"Why, what is it, Alice?" asked her husband.

"Listen," and then she read aloud the following item:

"Among the distinguished arrivals at the 'Maple Leaf' last evening was Doctor Angus MacLeod, of Glasgow. Dr. MacLeod, in a brief interview, expressed himself as delighted with Canada, which, with the keen appreciation of the Scotch, he regards as a land of exceptional opportunities, especially for those desiring to establish new homes. Dr. MacLeod, who is on his way to the Pacific Coast, will spend some days in Mapleton and vicinity."

"Angus MacLeod," exclaimed the Doctor. "Well, I'm so glad. He's such a lovely fellow. I will call in and see him on my way to the office. Can't we have him in to dinner to-night? You better arrange this, Alice. Get Jean and some others, you know."

"I'll just call Jean up right away and ask if she knows that he is here," replied Mrs. Maclaren.

"If she doesn't she soon will. Angus is not the kind to let the grass grow under his feet," said the Doctor, as he left for his office.

Doctor Maclaren had judged correctly, for

that afternoon, Doctor Angus MacLeod made his way to the "Elms."

For some years after Jean St. Claire's father had left Glasgow he had lived in Virginia, and subsequently taking up his abode in Mapleton, he had built a beautiful home which he had modeled after the type of those noble mansions so dear to the people of that "Old Dominion."

This stately house with its broad verandas was surrounded by sweeping lawns, whose velvety surface was diversified by flowers and shrubs and tall elm trees, which with their slender branches cast long shadows across it, and very beautiful indeed did it appear to Angus MacLeod, that afternoon, as he approached the iron gate which guarded its entrance.

As he advanced up the gravel walk which led from the gate to the front door, Jean herself appeared coming round the corner of the house, from the conservatory, carrying a bunch of newly plucked violets in her hand. Very charming and radiant did she look that afternoon dressed in white.

MacLeod's heart throbbed with an unusual excitement, as, raising his hat, he said, "I'm very glad to meet you again, Miss St. Claire—very glad, indeed."

"Oh, Dr. MacLeod," exclaimed Jean, cordially extending a hand of welcome, "where did you ever come from? This is a most unexpected pleasure—Grandmother will be so glad to meet you—she has so often spoken of you—you know, I told her how much you were devoted to Aberfeldy—which is the dearest place in all the world to her."

MacLeod's feelings were mingled as he replied, "Yes, that's a lovely spot, one of the most beautiful in the Highlands, so full of romantic associations; what was it Burns said about it,

> "Let fortune's gifts at random flee
> They ne'er shall draw a wish frae me,
> Supremely blessed wi' love and thee
> In the birks of Aberfeldy."

"Father was a great lover of Burns," replied Jean, as together they entered the house.

Old Mrs. St. Claire grasped MacLeod warmly by the hands and bade him a true Highland welcome to the "Elms." As a girl she had played among the birks of Aberfeldy, and one of her famous stories, which she used to recite to Jean and her sister, when as children she tucked them away in bed for the night, was about the never-to-be-forgotten time in her own girlhood days, when a strange man had come rushing on horse-

back into Aberfeldy after midnight and awakening the people had hurriedly informed them that McCheyne was to preach the following day in a neighboring glen, and that her father and mother at daybreak had started out on foot with many others to be present at that service.

MacLeod, whose own home had been at Aberfeldy, greatly rejoiced the old lady's heart as he minutely described these happy scenes of her childhood. Nor was Jean's interest less intense as Dr. MacLeod described to her the method by which Robert Koch had successfully discovered the "bacillus of tuberculosis," and her heart thrilled with sympathy when Dr. MacLeod added that it had for years been his passion to advance medical efficiency, by devoting at least a part of his time to the work of original research.

"There is no nobler work in all the world," exclaimed Jean. "Father was deeply interested in it, and frequently remarked that he could wish he was just beginning his medical career instead of closing it. He always insisted that the next quarter century would startle the world with its discoveries in Biology."

"I shall have the pleasure of meeting you again this evening, at Doctor Maclaren's," said Dr. MacLeod to Jean, as he reluctantly took leave of

her that afternoon.

"Mrs. Maclaren's dinners are famous," replied Jean, "and you will probably meet some charming Canadian girls as well," and then she added, "you know we are all quite proud of Miss Canada."

"I am not surprised," replied MacLeod, and with his large gray eyes he looked into her face and added, "any one who wouldn't be filled with admiration for them would surely be daft."

"He's a lovely man," remarked old Mrs. St. Claire to Jean as she reentered the room, "and your father would have been delighted indeed to know him. He is so lofty in his purposes and he was born in Aberfeldy," and with a tender tone in her voice as gentle memories of the past filled her heart, she repeated the word, "Aberfeldy," sighing, "Ah, me!"

The days of Dr. MacLeod's sojourn in Mapleton seemed to him to have wings.

The Maclaren dinner was only the beginning of a series of receptions and entertainments, which were arranged in his honor.

The mornings were passed on the Golf Links, the afternoons in motoring, and the evenings in the delightful homes of Mapleton, chiefly at the Maclarens', the MacGregors' or the St. Claires'.

Muir, who had been present on more than one occasion, was most gracious to all. He and Dr. MacLeod sat together in Dr. Maclaren's den one night and exchanged reminiscences of Edinburgh with rare enjoyment.

"You remember Professor Charles Snodgrass, the great Edinburgh surgeon," said MacLeod to Muir, on one of these occasions.

"A great surgeon he was but a wee bit pompous. It is told of him that having been called out of the City to perform an operation, he placed upon the door of his classroom the notice, 'Dr. Professor Snodgrass will not meet his classes until Friday afternoon, having been summoned to Glen Dochart, to perform a critical operation.' Well—some wag of a student had the audacity to inscribe underneath the words, 'No wreaths, no flowers.' "

"That was not half as bad as what happened to Graham," said Dr. Maclaren, "who having announced to his class one day that he had been appointed physician to the Queen, the students rose en masse and sang 'God Save the Queen.' "

The Maclarens and St. Claires and MacGregors, as well as Muir, greatly enjoyed these evenings together, but at the close of a delightful night, spent at the St. Claires', on their way

home, Mrs. Maclaren said to her husband, "What was the matter with Muir to-night?"

"Why?" asked the Doctor.

"Well, he seemed to be so absent-minded; he called me Mrs. MacGregor twice and then he started away home without his overcoat and had to return for it."

A few days later the train bore Dr. Angus MacLeod away from Mapleton.

The night before his departure he had spent the evening with Jean St. Claire. Dinner being over, he had suggested to her that they should take a walk in the garden. The moonlight streaming through the elm branches, which were gently swayed by the evening breeze, covered their pathway with fitful lights and shadows. Angus MacLeod had left Scotland full of hope and happiness, at the prospect of finding Jean and winning her love, but for the last day or two doubts had crept into his heart. He could not understand why, but he had not seemed to make any progress. Jean, while exceedingly kind and gracious to him, had carefully avoided giving him any reason to think that she regarded him with other feelings than those of a friend whom she admired and respected.

That day, however, he had resolved that he could not endure this agitation and suspense any longer, and, as they strolled up and down the walk in the garden, he had at last ventured to tell her all that was in his heart.

He confided to her the story of the love that had filled his heart at the time of their first meeting in Glasgow—of his great disappointment in not having seen her again before she had sailed home—of how his thoughts had gone with her, and of how he had impatiently counted the days, until he too could follow her to her far away home across the sea—of how upon meeting her again his love had increased in tenderness and strength. As he concluded this passionate outpouring of his heart, he stopped at a turn in the walk, and looked her directly in the face. She stood and looked at him in silence. Her lips trembled in the moonlight, and it seemed as though she could not utter a word.

He had hoped to see her face illuminated with love and happiness, but instead of this her features were drawn and pale.

He moaned—"Jean, Jean, don't you love me—don't you love me?"

At length, she took his hand in hers, and gently placing her other hand upon his arm, replied:

"Angus, this is impossible—this can never be."

He was too much of a gentleman to insist upon her giving her reason. Late that night, after walking far out into the country, he had returned to his room in the hotel and packed up his grips, murmuring to himself, "She loves some one else —happy man, whoever he may be."

That night Jean slipped noiselessly back into the house and went quickly to her room, but not to sleep. Slipping on her dressing gown, she sat down by the open window and looking out over the moonlit garden, she kept saying to herself, "Why? Why? Why?"

She acknowledged to herself that she had admired him as a man, that she had been deeply interested in his plans as a physician, but she knew that she did not love him. She knew also that the MacGregors and Maclarens fully expected that she would marry him, and then her Grandmother had constantly spoken of him so fondly, and she realized that they would all be disappointed. Then as the remembrance of the intense look of anguish upon his face came before her tears ran down her cheeks, and this night, which might have been the happiest of her life, had proved the most wretched. As she searched everywhere in her heart for a reason, the face

of Muir seemed to come before her in a vision and, as she looked into his eyes, she murmured, "Oh, I know, my heart is his!"

Then, walking up and down her room, her heart was torn with conflicting emotions, "I love him, I love him, but he has never thought of me; he loves his work, it fills his heart, it satisfies his life." And again the why! why! came to her lips.

Then sitting down again beside the open window, she said, "So this is love! I thought that love was a palace of delights, of dawns and sunrise and singing birds, of flowers and perfume and songs of joy, but love is pain, love is anguish, love is death." Then, as the pale light of a new day broke over the eastern sky she fell into a troubled sleep.

III

THE REVEREND JAMES MUIR

Mrs. Maclaren had not spoken without cause when she remarked to her husband that Muir seemed particularly absent-minded. Indeed, could she have seen him, as he sat late into the night, staring into his study fire, whose

dying embers appeared to reflect his own heart's experience, she would have understood the cause of his mental absorption.

For weeks he had, all unknown to Mrs. MacGregor, or indeed to any of the members of St. Giles, been passing through an experience of unspeakable inward conflict. Nor did he conceal from himself that this issue concerned the supreme passion of his very life.

He had met Jean St. Claire shortly after his arrival in Mapleton, and he had fallen desperately in love with her. For long he had endeavored to suppress this passion. With his exalted ideals of the ministry, he felt almost guilty to concede even to himself that his heart should have prompted him to entertain like feelings of love toward a member of his flock. Not that, in principle, he believed in the celibacy of the clergy, but it seemed to him that in going around his Parish he ought not to entertain towards any of his people sentiments other than spiritual. Thus far, he had heroically controlled this emotion even if he could not declare to himself that he had been able to banish it totally from his thoughts.

He had inferred, moreover, from a word dropped by Mrs. Maclaren, that Jean's affections were probably engaged elsewhere, and with the

coming of MacLeod to Mapleton there was but little doubt left in his mind that Jean's fate had been finally sealed.

The Sunday succeeding MacLeod's departure, Jean did not appear in her usual pew in the Kirk. It was said that she had not been well. Early in the week he had called at the St. Claires' expecting to find her radiant with happiness, even though indisposed in body, but to his great surprise he discovered that she looked like one who had recently passed through an experience of most intense mental suffering.

She greeted him with a certain shyness and reserve, such as he had never witnessed in her before. He longed to fathom the cause of her apparent trouble, but there was a something in the atmosphere that seemed to erect an impossible barrier between them. On his way home, endeavor as he might to unravel the circumstances, he simply could not fathom this mystery. The last time he had seen MacLeod and Jean together they had appeared so happy, but now MacLeod was gone and his name had not even been mentioned either by Jean or by her Grandmother, Mrs. St. Claire. What could have happened? He could not imagine that any trifling misunderstanding had precipitated a rupture be-

tween them. He was sure that MacLeod had loved Jean. No one who had seen them together would have doubted this for a moment, nor did he have any reason to conclude that Jean had not returned the affection of him whose sudden departure had seemed to coincide with Jean's unexpected illness.

Hour after hour he revolved this problem in his mind. "Why did MacLeod leave so suddenly?"—"Why all this change in Jean?" But the solution baffled all his attempts, analyze the circumstances as he might. Moreover, Mrs. MacGregor, who loved Jean so devotedly and who had many a time spoken of her to him, was now mysteriously silent! Nor did the coming days and weeks afford his mind any clue. Finally, one day at dinner, Mrs. MacGregor announced that Jean St. Claire was going abroad.

"Ah," said Muir, "will she be married abroad?" and then he bit his lip, for the question had slipped out really before he had considered.

"No," answered Mrs. MacGregor, "she's goin' ow'er ta Germany, ta study airt. There's some freens o' her faither's ow'er there frae New York, an' she expec's ta spend some months wi' them, but A'll miss her sair," and so saying she heaved a deep sigh. "She's no been hersel o' late

an' A' canna mak oot what's tha maitter wi' her."

"Probably it's MacLeod," Muir ventured and then stopped himself.

"Na, na, it's no MacLeod—he was a douce chiel, but Jean didna lose her hert ta him."

As Mrs. MacGregor uttered these words, Muir's heart gave a bound. Going upstairs to his study, he asked himself might there be hope for him after all.

The evening before Jean left Mapleton for Germany she and Muir had taken informal dinner at the Maclarens', and as the Doctor, who had been called to a case, had not returned when the hour arrived for them to leave, Mrs. Maclaren said to Muir, "Mr. Muir, will you kindly see Miss St. Claire home to-night?"

"I shall be delighted, indeed," replied Muir.

As they passed under the electric light which was suspended from a high post that stood near the gate of the "Elms," Muir remarked that he was anticipating spending his vacation in Europe the following summer, and that he hoped he might have the good fortune to meet her at that time in Germany. Saying these words, their eyes met for a moment, it was only a moment, but in that moment their hearts experienced a mysterious and undefined emotion.

CHAPTER XV

THE AULD KIRK O' ST. GILES

I

"ST. GILES"

WITH the coming of the Reverend James Muir, the auld Kirk of St. Giles had entered upon a new chapter in its history. The conversion of David Bruce had stirred the young men of the City and not only was the influence of this great change in his life felt among the members of the Stag Club, which had now become "The Mapleton Glee Club," but also among other men who had hitherto not manifested any personal interest in religion. James Muir, quick to take advantage of this new and serious feeling in the church and City, had organized at the psychological moment a Bible Association which gathered into its membership scores of the young men. The Glee Club, moved by a new social conscience, earnestly supported his efforts, and at each meet-

ing of the Bible Association took full charge of the music. The Sunday previous to the winter Sacrament, after many of the men had confessed their desire to enter upon the Christian life, the Glee Club concluded one of the most memorable men's meetings ever held in St. Giles by singing the words of the psalm to the tune of St. George's Edinburgh, in the singing of which all the members of the class heartily united.

> "Ye gates lift up your heads on high;
> Ye doors that last for aye
> Be lifted up that so the king
> Of glory enter may."

Surely upon that day the King of Glory, in all the plenitude of his glorious power, had entered through the open doors of many human hearts, and the effects of this great spiritual awakening among the men of Mapleton were far-reaching. The saloons were gradually deserted, and for lack of customers many of them were compelled to close their doors. Young men who used to spend their evenings in the questionable atmosphere of these barrooms were now to be found in the Club Rooms of the new Curling Rink, where, after a roaring game, topped off with a large cup of Walter Scot's best coffee and an appetizing lunch, they returned to their homes, in the best

of spirits, ready for a good night's sleep and with faculties unimpaired, to resume their several duties on the following day.

While there still remained some men in this City who continued in their cups, yet even these began to feel that this form of conviviality was no longer regarded as respectable by the best people, so that their numbers gradually diminished and, in all essential respects, Mapleton came to be regarded as a dry city.

Not that Muir had ever preached a prohibition sermon, but somehow, under the influence of his life and preaching, coupled with the peculiar respect of that influence exerted by the conversion of David Bruce, a great moral change had taken place in the circles of the men.

The bell of St. Giles was heard far over the homes of the people. But farther than the sounds of its chimes, and more impressive by far, was the influence exerted by its membership in promoting good citizenship.

II

THE BEADLE OF ST. GILES

The beadle of St. Giles was well known as a "town character." For upwards of half a cen-

tury he had exercised his authority within St. Giles over preacher and people alike, and few indeed there were who ventured to take liberties with Thomas Wishart, as he was called, in those matters pertaining more immediately to his office.

For years previous to Muir's pastorate the said Thomas had been a keen critic of the preceding minister, who had mortally offended him upon the first day of his ministry by manifesting some lack of deference.

The elders were accustomed to tell the initiated of how, after this unfortunate episode, Thomas, drawing himself up to the full height of his dignity, had with grave solemnity declared to Muir's predecessor, "Mr. Campbell—I was in charge of this pulpit for years before you ever set foot in it and I shall be in charge of this pulpit long after you have gone from it." Sure enough, this bon mot of the said Thomas had proved correct. However, Muir happened to be a minister whose doctrine and methods had both been favorably received by Thomas from the first, and shortly after Muir's induction, Thomas was reported to have replied to some one who inquired of him as to his opinion of the new minister, in the brief but sententious words, "Elijah's come," and after some months had elapsed in which a great awak-

ening had taken place in St. Giles this oracle took the opportunity to remark again to the same party, "Mr. ———, I told you that Elijah had come."

III

HECTOR MACFARLANE

It was the custom in St. Giles for all those who desired admission to the full membership of the Kirk to appear in person before the Session and there to give evidence to the elders that they were fit and proper persons to be received into the membership of the Kirk.

Needless to say, some candidates were rejected. The elders were seriously disposed men, who magnified their office, and upon such occasions they were accustomed to put such questions to the candidates as would reveal to the Court as well as to the candidates themselves their true spiritual condition.

On one such occasion an incident occurred that Muir was never likely afterwards to forget.

Hector MacFarlane, an old Highlander, who lived in the Highland Settlement some six miles out of Mapleton, came to the decision in his own

mind that having passed the three score and ten mark, it was high time that he should take this step. His life had been passed in that rural district, in which he had been regarded as a kind of "Witch Doctor." He was certainly a strange character. He had the reputation of having, upon several occasions, inserted quicksilver into the cows' horns, as a sure means of preventing the milk going sour. Among the elders of St. Giles he was not regarded as a religious man. However, few there were among them who cared to take him to task, for he bore the reputation of being mighty in debate. Dressed in a new suit of black broadcloth, he presented himself before the Session and stated that, being now up in years, he desired to be received into the membership of the Kirk.

Muir listened to his statement and then turning to the elders, said, "Gentlemen, you have heard Mr. MacFarlane's statement and request. It is your privilege now to satisfy yourselves as to his fitness to be received by this Court into the membership of St. Giles. Perhaps you would like to ask Mr. MacFarlane some questions." After a silence of several minutes one of the elders finally said, "Yes, I would like to ask Mr. MacFarlane a question," and then continued,

"Hector—I should say, Mr. MacFarlane—what are your views on the subject of prayer?"

Old Hector cleared his throat and then replied something after the following manner:

"Meenister and elders o' tha Coort—A' nae na mony views o' tha subjec' o' prayer, but A'll jist tell ye hoo it iss wi' me: When A' gaes ta ma bed, if A'm sayin' tha prayers, A' jist kneels doon and says, 'Noo A' lay me,' an' tha rest o' it—an' then if A'm no ow'er calt, A' says, 'Oor Faither,' and the rest o' it, an' then A' whupps inta ma bed an' A'm aye gled when it's a' ow'er. Noo, Maister Moderator, A'm jist thinkin' that ma views o' tha subjec' o' prayer may no be maist satisfaictory ta tha Coort, but A'm wantin' ta jine tha Kirk an' A'm wullin' ta gie evidences o' ma abeelities, an' if tha meenister here wull jist name ony subjec' at his pleasure, A' wull undertake ta argue ony twa o' tha elders."

With great difficulty, Muir maintained the dignity of the Chair, while one of the elders soberly informed Hector that he had entirely misunderstood what was required of those who could be received into the membership of the Kirk; that it was not his argumentative abilities which were under examination, but his spiritual experience.

As old Hector left the session room, apparently

rather crestfallen, Muir shook him warmly by the hand and leading him to the door, confided, "that St. Paul, who had written at least one-third of the New Testament, was a man of outstanding argumentative ability, and that God had seen fit to bring about his conversion, so that the church might for all times to come enjoy the benefits of his strong arguments in defense of the faith once delivered to the saints, and then he asked Hector to go back to the Settlement and announce that there would be a weekly service conducted by the Minister of St. Giles, each Thursday night, in the School House." So it came to pass that in due time old Hector MacFarlane, having been instructed in the Word, was able to give to the elders satisfactory evidence of the faith that was in him. To his dying day, however, Hector was accustomed to tell his neighbors that Maister Muir was the Godliest Christian he had ever been privileged to know, for he—was—so—strong—in—argument.

IV

THE SERVICE OF PRAISE

The Law of the Presbyterian Church declares that,—

"The service of praise is under the direction of the session and subject to its control."

This authority was jealously guarded by the elders of St. Giles, who insisted that the choir and organ should not be permitted to monopolize the praise of the sanctuary, and so it happened that St. Giles was noted for its congregational singing.

When the psalm had been announced, it seemed as though every voice in the vast assembly of worshipers was vocal in the praise of the Most High.

Not long after Vernera Pemberton had joined the choir of St. Giles, a petition, bearing the signatures of some interested parties, was addressed to the session, praying that the number of congregational singings at each service should be reduced from four to three, and that in the place of this one praise selection, the choir should be requested to provide a solo. This petition went on to say that the church was fortunate in now having in its choir Miss Vernera Pemberton, whose musical culture was well known to be of a high order, and that the time seemed ripe to introduce into the service of praise this new and attractive feature.

The motion made by one of the younger elders,

that this petition be granted, did not, however, prevail.

James Burgess was upon his feet at once, with blood in his eye.

He argued that God could not be worshiped vicariously, and that there was nothing, to his way of thinking, more incongruous than for a congregation to pretend they were worshiping God when they were listening to a choir performing. That while such performances might help the oil to run down Aaron's beard, yet grease was not grace and that you cannot make people Christians by pumping wind into them.

He related how, on his recent trip to an American metropolis, he had attended one of the fashionable churches, which was famed for the excellence of its choir.

He had found the pews more than half empty, and when the hymn was given out, scarcely a voice was heard in the pews. The choir of that church was paid to sing, and the congregation was busy listening to see whether they were getting the worth of their money or not, and then, with a twinkle in his eye, he told the story of how one day an old darky, who had entered the door of that church and seated himself down in a back pew, being thrilled with the words of the hymn,

had ventured to uplift his voice in the praise of God. For this he was promptly reproved by an usher, who had told him, "to keep quiet or get out."

"But, I'se got religion," exclaimed the darky, "I must praise de Lor'."

"You keep quiet," replied the usher, "d'ye understand?"

"I'se got religion—I'se got religion," pleaded the darky.

"Oh, you have, eh?" said the usher. "Then you get out of here—this is no place for you to get religion."

After a moment's pause, during which the dignified elders had knowingly smiled at the point of Burgess' story, he added, "Moderator and Brethren, in all seriousness, there is something in a crowd singing that grips the very chords of the soul. Especially when the tune is associated with sacred memories. The longer I live, the more am I convinced of the value of hearty congregational singing, and it will be a happy day for all the churches when they regain the voice of the congregation.

"The best music is none too good for the worship of the Most High, but better the sincerity and simplicity of true devotion, rendered

with a cracked voice, than the most elegant melody that is a' soun'."

Right or wrong, the words of James Burgess convinced the elders and they unanimously agreed that the choir, with the able assistance of Miss Vernera Pemberton, should diligently endeavor to cultivate the musical talents of the whole congregation, to the end that the praise of God should resound more and more within the sanctuary.

CHAPTER XVI

LOVE IS VICTORY

"Oh, why was the summer so sweet?
'Twas made of dawns and of calm noontides
And Sunsets where colors reside,
The beautiful peace of the deep purple night
And the glorious joy of Sunlight;
The Friendship of Stars, of wind and of trees,
Good comrades indeed were these,
The sound on the pane of the sweet gentle rain
That comes like an old refrain,
The soft night breeze that sang in the trees
And told of the murmuring sea;
The Love in your eyes, that time did defy,
'Twas that made a summer for me." [1]

THE spiritual awakening that had shaken the auld Kirk of St. Giles, during the first year of Muir's ministry, had proved to be of enduring influence.

Increasingly St. Giles had continued to exert a steady power for good upon the City of Mapleton.

[1] From "My Soldier Boy and Other Poems," by Mrs. John Archibald Morison. The Gorham Press, Boston.

It had also broadened the horizon of its practical Christian activities and was now supporting a missionary in India. Formerly the people of St. Giles had regarded missionary work as a permissible sentiment; now it was recognized by them as the highest type of Statesmanship; indeed, in missionary zeal and liberality, St. Giles was acknowledged as the premier church, not only of the Presbytery of Safford, but also throughout the entire Synod.

As we have already seen, Jean St. Claire had gone abroad to Germany. Her absence from Mapleton had created a blank, not only in the large circle of young people among whom she was exceedingly popular, but it had also proved a source of keen regret to two people, who, in different ways, were entirely devoted to her. These were Mrs. John MacGregor and the Reverend James Muir.

The latter had fallen desperately in love with her and, had his high sense of devotion to his calling not imposed upon him a severe self-repression, he would doubtless, like many another man in a similar state of mind, have made avowal of his love. As it was, having understood from Mrs. Maclaren that Jean's affections had been engaged elsewhere, he had sternly compelled him-

self to all the agony of silence. Nor had his intuitions ever revealed to him that Mrs. Maclaren's judgment in this respect might possibly have been unjustified until that moment when his eyes had looked into Jean's, on the last night of their meeting as he bade her good-by, and then the habit of self-repression, which had been so assiduously cultivated, would not permit him to tell her of what was uppermost in his heart.

The summer time came again and with it his annual vacation. He resolved to follow her to Germany.

Never did the Saxon Capital, with its countless towers and minarets, to a traveler from foreign lands, appear more alluring than it did to Muir as he drove along Prager Strasse from Bahnhof to the Europaischer Hof.

That night, although weary with the long and tedious journey by rail from Paris, for hours sleep refused to close his eyes. At last he was actually in the same city which contained, among its many thousands, that one and only one who was more than all the world besides to him.

He reviewed in his mind the circumstances of their last meeting and tried to convince himself that the momentary look which he had caught in her eye had silently suggested her love for him.

At any rate, upon the morrow he should know.

The morrow came, and in the forenoon he sought her at her pension on Berg Strasse, only to discover that she had gone, as was her habit, to the studio. Thither he made his way, and there he found her in the midst of her work, with a profusion of exquisite specimens of the Ceramic Art which her deft fingers had adorned.

She greeted him most cordially, and inquired for all her Mapleton friends, more especially for her mother's friend, Mrs. MacGregor.

This call could not, under the circumstances, be prolonged, but before he took his leave she had consented to accompany him that night to the Royal Opera.

As he walked back to the Hotel his heart oscillated between hope and despair. He asked himself had he been mistaken after all, was it possible that Jean St. Claire might love him? He did not know, for even although she must have known that he had journeyed all the way from Mapleton to Dresden for the one and only purpose of seeing her, yet she had failed to let one token of encouragement drop either in her words or look.

The evening came at last and with it the opera, which happened that night to be "Lohengrin."

During the interval between the second and third acts, Muir and Jean promenaded in the foyer, and just before they returned to their seats in the auditorium he suddenly whispered to her that, like "Lohengrin," he, too, had discovered his Elsa, and when, in the springtime, the swans should again appear upon the waters of the Iroquois, he hoped to claim her as his bride.

Saying these words, he quickly led the way to their seats.

Then followed the third act, in which Elsa appeared in all the restless agony born of her desire to discover the name of her lover.

Muir observed that Jean was strangely agitated, nor, as they walked back to her pension, did the cool night air avail to restore her composure.

Muir spoke of the opera and suddenly reverted to the subject of his own anticipated marriage.

"You have not told me the lady's name, nor when you became engaged," said Jean, as they entered the grounds surrounding the elegant pension.

"Oh," replied Muir, "that is easily done; she is of medium height, with wavy brown hair and lovely eyes, and her price is above rubies, but, as I told you, I hope to claim her as my bride when the swans return in the spring. Yes, I hope—I

hope—but—then—I do not really know—for—I am not yet engaged—I have had no opportunity as yet of telling her, but I shall tell her very soon—and if she should refuse the offering of my heart——!" And then he uttered an involuntary sigh.

"What is her name?" exclaimed Jean, adding, "but this I should not ask."

"Oh, yes, indeed, it is your privilege," answered Muir. "Her name—is—Jean St. Claire!" And then this strong man broke passionately forth in all the agony of his love.

"Jean, Jean, it is yourself I love, and have loved for long. I've hoped against hope and to-day I thought that I might have seen in your face, in your eyes, the lovelight which I had come so far to find. But I did not see it. Oh, Jean, you must love me, like a sailor at sea without a compass, like a traveler lost on the desert and dying of thirst have I been all the hours of this day and for many days. Once I had thought to satisfy my heart with the rewards of my calling, and in this indeed I succeeded until I saw you. And then, at the first, I vowed that I would crush down my love for you, but my love would not surrender; then I thought with deepest anguish that my love for you was hopeless because you

loved another, and a great dark loneliness settled down upon my heart; but the night we said good-by, our eyes met, my soul went out to yours, my whole being was inflamed and I went home intoxicated with hope, saying over and over to myself, 'Yes, she will love me; she must love me. I'll win her yet; I'll conquer her heart; I'll call her mine.' From that very hour, you, my dearest one, have never been absent from my thoughts, waking or sleeping I have thought and dreamed of you and loved you with all the devotion of my heart. This is why to-night, half insane, I told you that I hoped to be married in the spring-time when the swans returned, and I have hoped it, yes, so long and earnestly. Perhaps to-night I should not have spoken, but my heart refused to be silent; I could not wait, I had to speak, I had to tell you. Answer me, tell me, if it is possible that you can ever return my love."

Drawing nearer to him, she responded, "I have always loved you," and the face she raised to his was transfigured with a brightness such as no artist was ever able to describe.

He clasped her in his arms and their lips met in a tender embrace.

Then followed the happiest days of their lives.

Their hearts were in the rapture of a supreme joy.

Together they visited the Picture Gallery with its marvelous canvases of Correggio, Titian, Tintoretto, Murillo, Rubens, Rembrandt, and many others.

Here, also, they found the most celebrated of all Raphael's Madonnas, in which the Holy Virgin appears descending from on high, bearing the Christ Child, her whole attitude being not that of a sorrowing mother, but of a triumphant queen, holding in her arms Him who shall conquer the world, while on either side of the canvas appear the forms of Saint Sixtus and Saint Catherine, kneeling in adoration.

As together they gazed, for long, in silence upon the impressive lines of this most marvelous painting, it seemed as though the face of the Virgin Mother shone with a Heavenly light, bestowing upon their love her Benediction, and in the consciousness of her wide sovereignty over the hearts of human kind proclaiming that "Love is life; Love is victory; Love is Heaven."

Together they made happy excursions to Saxon Switzerland in the vicinity of Koenigstein and Lillienstein. They traversed together fairy

paths that wound their way through vast pine forests, whose thick dark foliage, pierced by occasional shafts of sunlight, seemed to guide their feet, as with celestial torches, symbolizing that throughout all the future days of their journeyings together, whether amid scenes of light or shadow, the flaming lamp of love would never fail.

Nor was this new-found happiness confined to their hearts alone—great rejoicings were heard in St. Giles, when Mrs. St. Claire announced the engagement of her granddaughter to the Reverend James Muir.

A beautiful brown stone house on Phillips Square was purchased by the Congregation for a Manse, and the following spring, after the nuptials of Muir and Jean had been celebrated in the Kirk of St. Giles, Jean St. Claire became the mistress of the Manse.

The wedding presents from the members of St. Giles were many and beautiful, all of them manifesting the love and esteem in which the minister and his wife were held by the congregation.

Among all these tokens of good will and affection, none was more highly prized by Muir and Jean than a young thoroughbred Newfoundland dog, which was presented to them by Hector Mac-

Farlane of the Highland Settlement, who in giving it to Muir had said, "She'll be a goot daug, Maister Muir. She's got the right strain in him. She'll be as wise as a serpent and as brave as a she-lion. I brocht her mother ma'sel frae Scotland. She'll belong to her sister, Duncan, who'll carry on her pisness for mony years in Newfoundland. She'll be the same breed as was presented to the King of England for her boys. You'll keep her and you'll love her and you'll nefer need a truer friend to defend you so long as she'll not be dead. And, mind you, it's auld Hector MacFarlane, of the Highland Settlement, what's saying these words."

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